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Wool Committee (Gr. Brit.)
I

AN

ACCOUNT

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

MERCHANTS, MANUFACTURERS,

AND OTHERS,

CONCERNED IN THE

Wool and Woollen Trade

OF

GREAT BRITAIN,

IN THEIR

APPLICATION TO PARLIAMENT,

That the Laws respecting the Exportation of Wool might not be altered, in arranging the Union with Ireland, but left to the Wisdom of the Imperial Parliament, if such a measure should hereafter appear to be just and expedient.

LONDON:

Printed by W. Phillips, George Yard, Lombard Street.

1800.

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ACCOUNT

AN ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MERCHANTS, MANUFACTURERS, AND OTHERS, CONCERNED IN THE WOOL AND WOOLLEN TRADE OF GREAT BRITAIN;

AND OTHERS,

THE Committee of Merchants, Manufacturers, and others, who have lately met at the Guildhall of London, for the purpose of representing to the Legislature, the very serious and alarming consequences to be apprehended from a Bill laid before Parliament, for prohibiting the Exportation of Wool, in arranging the Union with Ireland, have deemed it becoming and necessary, on the behalf of themselves, as the conductors of the staple manufacture of this kingdom, that a Public Record of the Transactions and the Proceedings relative to the evanual future advantage of the Manufacturers of this kingdom, that a Public Record of the Transactions and the Proceedings relative to the

1800.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MERCHANTS, MANUFACTURERS, AND OTHERS, CONCERNED IN THE WOOL AND WOOLLEN TRADE OF GREAT BRITAIN, &c.

THE Committee of Merchants, Manufacturers, and others, who have lately met at the Guildhall Coffee-houſe, in London, for the purpoſe of repreſenting to the Legiſlature, the very ſerious and alarming conſequences to be apprehended from a Repeal of the Laws Prohibiting the Exportation of Wool, in arranging the Union with Ireland, have deemed it becoming and neceſſary, on the behalf of themſelves, as the conductors of the great national cauſe of our firſt manufacture, as well as for the eventual future advantage of the Manufacturers of this kingdom, that a Public Record of the Tranſactions and the Proceedings rela-

tive to the ſame ſhould be made. With theſe views and motives it is, that a limited number of the following work has been printed for the uſe of the Deputies and others immediately concerned in our Woollen Trade. It conſiſts of——

1. Copy of the 6th and 7th Reſolutions of the Two Houſes of the Parliament of Ireland reſpecting an Union of the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.—2. The Petition of the Merchants, Factors, Warehouſemen and others concerned in the Wool and Woollen Trade, reſiding in London, preſented to both Houſes of Parliament.—3. Obſervations on the Subject of the Petition.—4. The Speech of Edward Law, Eſq. before the Houſe of Lords, as Counſel for the Petitioners.—5. Evidence, on oath, of the Manufacturers and others, given before the Houſe of Lords.—6. A correct Statement of the Debates in the Houſe of Commons on the Subject of Wool.—7. Speech of Thomas Plumer, Eſq. as Counſel for

the

the Petitioners, on ſumming up before the Lords.*

By order of the Committee,

JOHN MAITLAND,

Chairman.

Guildhall Coffee-houſe,
June 3, 1800.

* The buſineſs of the Petition to the Houſe of Commons was conducted preciſely in the ſame manner as that before the Lords.

NAMES

NAMES OF THE GENTLEMEN WHO FORMED THE COMMITTEE.

WOOL TRADE OF LONDON.

FACTORS AND WAREHOUSEMEN.

Mr. Andrews,
Bowerbank,
Brunſdon,
Burford,
Clementſon,
Dalby,
Havard,
Hilton,
Leach,
Maclean,
Mr. Maitland,
Pearſe,
Perring,
Shephard,
Sevaine,
Telford,
Townſhend,
Walford,
Wanſey,
Whitehead.

WOOLSTAPLERS.

Mr. Kitchen,
Moulden,
Newſon,
Nottige,
Mr. Oakley,
Riley,
Vaman.

FROM

FROM LEEDS.

Mr. Cookſon,
Fiſher,
Gott,
Linſley,
Markland,
Stancliffe,
Wilby.

FROM HUDDERSFIELD & SADDLEWORTH.

Mr. Atkinſon,
Crowder, (*agent for Sir John Ramſden, Bart.*)
Houghton,
Radcliffe,
Whitacre.

FROM BRADFORD.

Mr. Hardy,
Huſtler,
Pollard.

FROM WAKEFIELD.

Mr. Batly,
Lumb,
Naylor.

FROM HALIFAX.

Mr. Bramley,
Edwards,
Greenup,
Rawdon.

FROM COLNE AND BURNLY.

Mr. Hitchnon,
Maſſey.

FROM KETTERING.

Mr. Satchell.

FROM ROCHDALE.

Mr. Hamer.

FROM

FROM GLOUCESTER.

Mr. Cripps, *Cirencester*
Sheppard, *Uley*
Lewis, Wathen, Willis. } *Stroud*

FROM DEVON.

Mr. Sheppard.

FROM SOMERSET.

Mr. Mears, *Frome*

FROM SHEPTON-MALLET.

Mr. Jenkins.

FROM SHREWSBURY.

Mr. Cooke.

FROM MARKET HARBORO.

Mr. Clark.

FROM BUNBURY.

Mr. Snow.

FROM ESSEX.

Mr. Finch,
Start,
Nottidge.

FROM NORWICH.

Mr. Gurney,
Harvey,
Taylor.

EXTRACT

I

No. I.

EXTRACT

FROM THE

RESOLUTIONS

OF THE

TWO HOUSES

OF THE

PARLIAMENT OF IRELAND,

RESPECTING AN UNION OF THE KINGDOMS OF

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

Ordered to be printed 2d April, 1800.

RESOLVED,

THAT, for the ſame purpoſe, it would be fit to propoſe, as the ſixth article of Union, That his Majeſty's ſubjects of Great Britain and Ireland ſhall, from and after the firſt day of January, one thouſand eight hundred and one, be entitled to the ſame privileges, and be on the ſame footing as to encouragements and

 bounties

bounties on the like articles, being the growth, produce, or manufacture of either kingdom reſpectively, and generally in reſpect of trade and navigation in all ports and places in the United Kingdom and its dependencies: and that in all treaties made by his Majeſty, his heirs, and ſucceſſors, with any Foreign power, his Majeſty's ſubjects of Ireland ſhall have the ſame privileges, and be on the ſame footing, as his Majeſty's ſubjects of Great Britain: that from the firſt day of January, one thouſand eight hundred and one, all prohibitions and bounties on the export of articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country to the other, ſhall ceaſe and determine, and that the ſaid article ſhall thenceforth be exported from one country to the other without duty or bounty on ſuch export: that all articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture of either kingdom (not hereinafter enumerated as ſubject to ſpecific duties) ſhall from henceforth be imported into each country from the other free from duty, other than ſuch countervailing duty as ſhall be annexed to the ſeveral articles contained in the Schedule No. I. and that the articles hereinafter enumerated, ſhall be ſubject, for the period of twenty years from the Union, on importation into each country from

the

the other, to the duties ſpecified in the Schedule No. II. annexed to this article, viz.

Apparel,
Braſs, wrought,
Cabinet ware,
Coaches and other carriages,
Copper, wrought,
Cottons,
Glaſs,
Haberdaſhery,
Hats,
Tin plates, wrought iron, and hardware,
Lace, gold and ſilver; gold and ſilver thread,
Bullion for lace, pearl and ſpangles,
Millinery,
Paper, ſtained,
Pottery,
Saddlery,
Silk manufacture,
Stockings.

And that the woollen manufactures ſhall pay on importation into each country, the duties now payable on importation into Ireland; ſalt and hops on importation into Ireland, duties not exceeding thoſe which are now paid in Ireland; and coals on importation to be ſubject to burthens not exceeding thoſe to which they are now ſubject; that callicoes and muſlins be ſubject and liable to the duties now payable on the

ſame, until the fifth day of January one thouſand eight hundred and eight, and from and after the ſaid day, the ſaid duties ſhall be annually reduced in ſuch proportions and at ſuch periods as ſhall hereafter be enacted, ſo as that the ſaid duties ſhall ſtand at ten per cent. from and after the fifth day of January, one thouſand eight hundred and ſixteen, until the fifth day of January, which ſhall be in the year one thouſand eight hundred and twenty-one; and that cotton yarn and cotton twiſt ſhall alſo be ſubject and liable to the duties now payable upon the ſame until the fifth day of January, one thouſand eight hundred and eight, and from and after the ſaid day, the ſaid duties ſhall be annually reduced at ſuch times and in ſuch proportions as ſhall be hereafter enacted, ſo as that all duties ſhall ceaſe on the ſaid articles from and after the fifth day of January, one thouſand eight hundred and ſixteen: that any articles of the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, which are or may be ſubject to internal duty, or to duty on the materials of which they are compoſed, may be made ſubject on their importation into each country reſpectively from the other, to ſuch countervailing duty as ſhall appear to be juſt and reaſonable in reſpect to ſuch internal duty or duties on the materials; and that for the ſaid purpoſes, the articles ſpecified

ciſied in the ſaid Schedule No. I. ſhould upon importation into Ireland be ſubject to the duty which ſhall be ſet forth therein, liable to be taken off, diminiſhed, or increaſed, in the manner herein ſpecified; and that upon the like export of the like articles from each country to the other reſpectively, a drawback ſhall be given equal in amount to the countervailing duty payable on the articles hereinbefore ſpecified on the import into the ſame country with the other; and that in like manner, in future it ſhall be competent to the United Parliament to impoſe any new or additional countervailing duties, or to take off or diminiſh ſuch exiſting countervailing duties, as may appear on like principles to be juſt and reaſonable, in reſpect of any future or additional internal duty on any article of the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, or of any new or additional duty on any materials of which ſuch article may be compoſed, or of any abatement of the ſame; and that when ſuch new or additional countervailing duty ſhall be ſo impoſed on the import of any article into either country from the other, a drawback equal in amount to ſuch countervailing duty ſhall be given in like manner on the export of every ſuch article reſpectively from the ſame country: that all articles the growth, produce, or manufacture of either kingdom, when exported through the other, ſhall

in all caſes be exported ſubject to the ſame charges as if they had been exported directly from the country of which they were the growth, produce, or manufacture: that all duty charged on the import of foreign or colonial goods into either country, ſhall, on their export to the other, be either drawn back, or the amount, if any be retained, ſhall be placed to the credit of the country to which they ſhall be ſo exported, ſo long as the general expences of the empire ſhall be defrayed by proportional contributions; provided nothing herein ſhall extend to take away any duty, bounty, or prohibition which exiſts with reſpect to corn, meal, malt, flour, and biſcuit; but that the ſame may be regulated, varied, or repealed from time to time as the United Parliament ſhall deem expedient.

SCHEDULE, No. I.

Of the articles to be charged with countervailing duties upon importation from Great Britain into Ireland, according to the ſixth article of Union.

Articles to be charged with a countervailing duty in Ireland:

Beer,	Silk,
Glaſs,	Spirits,
Leather,	Sugar, refined,
Paper, ſtained,	Sweets,
Paper,	Tobacco.

SCHEDULE II.

Of the articles charged with the duties ſpecified upon importation into Great Britain and Ireland reſpectively, according to the ſixth article of Union.

Apparel,
Braſs, wrought,
Cabinet ware,
Coaches and other carriages,
Copper, wrought,
Cottons, except callicoes and muſlins,
Glaſs,
Haberdaſhery,
Hats,
Tin plates, wrought iron, and hardware
Lace, gold and ſilver; gold and ſilver thread,
Bullion for lace, pearl and ſpangles,
Millinery,
Paper, ſtained,
Pottery,
Saddlery & other manufactured leather
Silk manufacture,
Stockings.

} Ten per cent. on the true value.

RESOLVED,

That, for the ſame purpoſe, it would be fit to propoſe, as the ſeventh article of Union, That the charge ariſing from the payment of the intereſt, and the ſinking fund for the reduction of the principal of the debt incurred in either kingdom before the Union, ſhall continue to be ſeparately defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland reſpectively: that for the ſpace of twenty years after the Union ſhall take place, the contribution of Great Britain and Ireland reſpectively towards the expenditure of the United Kingdom, in each year, ſhall be defrayed in the proportion of fifteen parts for Great Britain, and two parts for Ireland: that at the expiration of the ſaid twenty years, the future expenditure of the United Kingdom (other than the intereſt and charges of the debt to which either country ſhall be ſeparately liable) ſhall be defrayed in ſuch proportion as the United Parliament ſhall deem juſt and reaſonable, upon a compariſon of the real value of the exports and imports of the reſpective countries, upon an average of the three years next preceding the period of reviſion; or on a compariſon of the value of the quantities of the following articles conſumed within the reſpective countries,

tries, on a ſimilar average; viz. beer, ſpirits, ſugar, wine, tea, tobacco, and malt; or, according to the aggregate proportion reſulting from both theſe conſiderations combined; or, on a compariſon of the amount of income in each country, eſtimated from the produce, for the ſame period, of a general tax (if ſuch ſhall have been impoſed) on the ſame deſcriptions of income in both countries; and that the parliament of the United Kingdom ſhall afterwards proceed in like manner to reviſe and fix the ſaid proportions, according to the ſame rules or any of them, at periods not more diſtant than twenty years nor leſs than ſeven years from each other, unleſs previous to any ſuch period the United Parliament ſhall have declared, as hereinafter provided, that the general expences of the empire ſhall be defrayed indiſcriminately by equal taxes impoſed on the like articles in both countries: that, for the defraying the ſaid expences according to the rules above laid down, the revenues of Ireland ſhall hereafter conſtitute a conſolidated fund, upon which, charges equal to the intereſt of her debt and ſinking fund ſhall in the firſt inſtance be charged, and the remainder ſhall be applied towards defraying the proportion of

the

the general expence of the United Kingdom to which Ireland may be liable in each year: that the proportion of contribution to which Great Britain and Ireland will by theſe articles be liable, ſhall be raiſed by ſuch taxes in each kingdom reſpectively as the parliament of the United Kingdom ſhall from time to time deem fit; provided always, that in regulating the taxes in each country by which their reſpective proportions ſhall be levied, no article in Ireland ſhall be liable to be taxed to any amount exceeding that which will be thereafter payable in England on the like article: that if at the end of any year any ſurplus ſhall accrue from the revenues of Ireland, after defraying the intereſt, ſinking fund, and proportional contribution, and ſeparate charges to which the ſaid country is liable, either taxes ſhall be taken off to the amount of ſuch ſurplus, or the ſurplus ſhall be applied by the United Parliament to local purpoſes in Ireland, or to make good any deficiency which may ariſe in her revenues in time of peace, or be inveſted by the commiſſioners of the national debt of Ireland in the funds, to accumulate for the benefit of Ireland at compound intereſt, in eaſe of her contribution in time of war, provided the ſurplus ſo to

accu-

accumulate, ſhall at no future period be ſuffered to exceed the ſum of five millions: that all monies hereafter to be raiſed by loan in peace or war, for the ſervice of the United Kingdom, by the parliament thereof, ſhall be conſidered to be a joint debt, and the charges thereof ſhall be borne by the reſpective countries in the proportion of their reſpective contributions; provided that if at any time in raiſing their reſpective contributions hereby fixed for each kingdom, the parliament of the United Kingdom ſhall judge it fit to raiſe a greater proportion of ſuch reſpective contributions in one kingdom within the year than in the other, or to ſet apart a greater proportion of ſinking fund for the liquidation of the whole or any part of the loan raiſed on account of the one country, than of that raiſed on account of the other country, then ſuch part of the ſaid loan, for the liquidation of which different proviſions have been made for the reſpective countries, ſhall be kept diſtinct, and ſhall be borne by each ſeparately, and only that part of the ſaid loan be deemed joint and common for the reduction of which the reſpective countries ſhall have made proviſion in the proportion of their reſpective contributions: that if at any future day

day the ſeparate debt of each kingdom reſpectively ſhall have been liquidated, or the values of their reſpective debts (eſtimated according to the amount of the intereſt and annuities attending the ſame, of the ſinking fund applicable to the reduction thereof, and the period within which the whole capital of ſuch debt ſhall appear to be redeemable by ſuch ſinking fund) ſhall be to each other in the ſame proportion with the reſpective contributions of each kingdom reſpectively, or where the amount by which the value of the larger of ſuch debts ſhall vary from ſuch proportion ſhall not exceed one hundredth part of the ſaid value, and if it ſhall appear to the United Parliament that the reſpective circumſtances of the two countries will thenceforth admit of their contributing indiſcriminately, by equal taxes impoſed on the ſame articles in each, to the future general expence of the United Kingdom, it ſhall be competent to the ſaid United Parliament to declare, that all future expence thenceforth to be incurred, together with the intereſt and charges of all joint debts contracted previous to ſuch declaration, ſhall be ſo defrayed indiſcriminately, by equal taxes impoſed on the ſame articles in each country, and thenceforth from time to time,

as

as circumſtances may require, to impoſe and apply ſuch taxes accordingly; ſubject only to ſuch particular exemptions or abatements in Ireland, and that part of Great Britain called Scotland, as circumſtances may appear from time to time to demand; that from the period of ſuch declaration, it ſhall no longer be neceſſary to regulate the contribution of the two countries towards the future general expences, according to any ſpecific proportion, or according to any of the rules hereinbefore preſcribed; provided nevertheleſs, that the intereſt or charges which may remain on account of any part of the ſeparate debt with which either country is chargeable, and which ſhall not be liquidated or conſolidated proportionably as above, ſhall, until extinguiſhed, continue to be defrayed by ſeparate taxes in each country: that a ſum not leſs than the ſum which has been granted by the parliament of Ireland, on the average of the laſt ſix years, as premiums for the internal encouragement of agriculture or manufactures, or for the maintaining inſtitutions for pious and charitable purpoſes, ſhall be applied, for the period of twenty years after the Union, to ſuch local purpoſes, in ſuch manner as the parliament of the United Kingdom ſhall direct:

direct: that from and after the first day of January one thousand eight hundred and one, all public revenue arising from the territorial dependencies of the United Kingdom, shall be applied to the general expenditure of the empire, in the proportions of the respective contributions of the two countries.

No. II.

PETITION presented April 23d, 1800.*

To the Honorable the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled.

The Petition *of the* Merchants, Factors, Warehousemen, *and Others, concerned in the* Wool *and* Woollen Trade, *residing in London,*

SHEWETH,

THAT your Petitioners observe, with inexpressible concern, that in the projected arrangement of the Union with the Sister Kingdom, she proposes, That the existing laws, prohibiting the Exportation of British Wool, should be repealed, so far as relates to herself, whilst on her part she claims the continuance of protecting duties for her Woollen Manufactures.

That your Petitioners humbly conceive and believe, that the growth of Wool in Great Britain is not sufficient to supply the Manufactures thereof with a quantity equal to the present demand for Home Consumption and Foreign Markets, so that if any part is suffered to be taken away, your Petitioners and the Manufacturers must experience very great injury.

* A like Petition, *mutatis mutandis*, was presented to the House of Lords on the 30th of April, 1800.

That

That your Petitioners are moſt ſeriouſly alarmed, in caſe Britiſh Wool ſhould be permitted to be exported, That under pretence of carrying it to Ireland, great quantities would be conveyed to Foreign Countries, without the poſſibility of prevention, (eſpecially in times of Peace) and that the facility with which it might be paſſed from various parts of Ireland, free from detection, furniſhes ſtrong apprehenſions that ſtill larger quantities would find their way into Foreign Countries, whereby the Britiſh Merchant and Manufacturer would ſuffer, and the enemies and rivals of the United Kingdoms be furniſhed with means of ſupplanting both your Petitioners, and the new Members of the Empire in Foreign Markets.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray, That no alteration may be made in the exiſting laws, ſo far as they prohibit the Exportation of Wool; and that your Petitioners may be heard by their Counſel at the Bar of your Honorable Houſe.

Maitlands, Sterry, & Nettleſhipp
George Whitehead & Son
Jones, Havard & Jones
J. N. & B. Pearſe
Fryer, Telford, Liddell & Smallman
Bowerbank, Monkhouſe & Co.
Wanſey Jefferies & Co.

Richard

Richard Burford
Edward & Thomas Sheppard
John & Philip Perring
Thomas Andrews & Co.
Andrews & Brooke
R. J. & E. Swaine & Co.
Streatfield & Weſt
Clementſon, Borradaile & Jackſon
Greens & Walford
King & Snow
Stainton & Hodgſon
William Rawſon & Co.
Royds & Brockbank
Charles Brunſdon & Co.
John Yeatherd
John Lightfoot & Co.
John Pollard & Co.
Storks, Blythe & Co.
Relph & Todhunter
Tiplady, Lloyd & Pritchard
James Buſhell
Hornyold & Mills
Blake & Paxton
Edward Dowling
Edward Dowling, junior
Charles & John Goſs Weſt
Jones & Wakeman
Wetherill & Fayle
T. & S. Wallington
Richard Carpenter Smith, Sons & Co.

William Puckle & Co.
R. & S. Bousfield
Favell, Bousfield & Son
B. Hitchcock
William & Samuel Wright & Co.
Beddome, Fyſh & Co.
Lonſdale & Tomſon
John Wallace
Thomas Atwood
Nath. Robarts
Brittens & Meek
Robert Lawſon
Guſtard & Young
F. Lewis
Henry Smith
W. & H. Marchant
G. Griffiths
Charles Ivatts
Perry & Rigg
W. Stebbing
Thomas Dawſon
E. J. Pinegar
William Ghrimes
John Smith & King
Thomas Kidder
J. Berridge
Morley, Wilſon & Morley
E. & S. Hall & Co.
John Newcomb & Son

Joſeph

Joſeph Lobb & Son
Mytton, Jones & Owen, *Delobran*
John Kynaſton
Geldard & Ridley, *Richmond*
Howell, Taylor & Co.
John Maſon
J. & George Scott
Hankinſon, Haydock & Burls
Weddell & Till
S. Nicklin
Veſie, Wyer & Swift
Leaver Legg
Appleby & Arlington
Rd. Rankin
Joſeph Woods & Son
Thomas Spooner
Robert Irvine
William Mills
Maund, Wickſteed & Co.
Puckle, Coſteker & Co.
John Parry
John Peacock
Richard Otley
Joſeph Chadwick
Joſeph Addington
George Hardiſty
Edward Roberts
Hurd & Lonſdale
Jeffrey, Ludlam & Co.

William Hodgſon
Parker & Hincheliff
William Warberton
William Lee
John Auguſtus Streit
Sheppard & Chapman
Sarah Lawrance
G. Seddon & Sons
Smith, Trower, & Co.
Wm. Anderſon
Wm. Saint
James Carter
Barlow & Marſh
R. Roycroft Wrather
Joſeph Sumner
Burne & Co.
John Johnſon
F. H. Alford
Bradley & Paley
T. & I. Barber

Petitions were alſo preſented from

CORNWALL. . 1

DEVONSHIRE.

Exeter
Totneſs
Tiverton
Taviſtock
} . . . 4

GLOUCESTER.

Glouceſter
Cirenceſter
Painſwick
} 3

LANCASHIRE.

Bury
Colne
Rochdale
Preſton
Burnley
Haſlingdon
} 6

LEICESTER.

Market Harboro 1

MONTGOMERY.

Welch Pool 1

NORFOLK.

Norwich 1

OXFORD.

Witney, Banbury 2

SOMERSET.

Frome, Weſtern Parts of the County of Somerſet, Wivelſcombe 3

SHROPSHIRE.

Shrewſbury 1

SUFFOLK.

Bury St. Edmunds & the neighbouring towns, Sudbury 2

SURRY.

Southwark 1

YORK-

YORKSHIRE.

Leeds Huddersfield Halifax Bradford Wakefield Haworth Addingham Keighly Skipton	9

WESTMORELAND.

Kendal	1

WORCESTERSHIRE.

Kidderminſter	1

WILTSHIRE.

Saliſbury	1

No. III.

OBSERVATIONS,

Which were annexed to a printed copy of the Petition, and diſtributed to the Members of both Houſes of Parliament.

OUR Native WOOL, has always been acknowledged to be of the higheſt importance to this iſland, and never was more ſo than at the preſent period. It poſſeſſes an undoubted ſuperiority over the reſt of Europe, for ſuch fabrics as are of the greateſt utility and moſt extended conſumption; and the wiſe policy of our Legiſlature has inſured this invaluable material to our own manufacturers by laws ſtrictly confining it within our own ſhores, under the ſevereſt penalties.

This policy is founded on the ſelf-evident principle, that it is better to maintain our own induſtrious workmen, and enrich our manufacturers and merchants, by working up our native produce, than to ſuffer it to become the inſtrument of a rival trade in other countries.

The vaſt body of uſeful men, and their families, employed in the manufacture of wool, give

give life to agriculture, and raiſe the value of lands, by the conſumption of its productions, whilſt they largely contribute to the public revenue by the uſe of various articles of exciſe and cuſtoms, which are paid for by their productive labours, and give employment and ſupport to another very large portion of the inhabitants of this kingdom.

The woollens of Great Britain have found their way into every part of the world. Superiority in the raw material, aſſiſted by the improvements in machinery, have increaſed the conſumption to ſuch a degree, that it is an uncontrovertible fact, the wools of our iſland are inſufficient to ſupply the preſent demand.

The amount of woollen fabrics exported in the year is nearly eight millions and a half ſterling, which is more than a fourth of all the exports of Britiſh produce and manufactures. This immenſe ſum, with the addition of freight, commiſſion, and inſurance, exceeds one-third of the whole rental of our landed property, and *is nearly a clear profit paid by foreigners to this iſland.*

Ships, carriages, machinery, roads, canals, buildings, &c. conſtitute that part of our capital to which, with the ingenuity of our manufacturers, we are ſo highly indebted for our

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rapid acceſſions of wealth and power. How much of theſe owe their exiſtence and ſupport to the great ſtaple article, WOOL, the material of our earlieſt, moſt extenſive, and moſt valuable manufacture, cannot with facility be ſtated. It is highly probable that one-fifth of this ſtock is employed by the woollen trade; and all the charges of making and maintaining the ſame, and the ſupport of the many thouſands ſo employed, muſt conſequently be derived from this manufacture.

That manufacturing induſtry, and the uſe of machinery, do increaſe the wealth and population of a country, and raiſe the value of its lands, are truths too obvious to be enlarged upon. It is of the moſt notorious publicity, that within the laſt forty years, lands have increaſed in value more than three-fold, in diſtricts rendered flouriſhing by theſe cauſes; and it is equally well known, that by the decline of manufactures in other parts of the kingdom, the poor's rates have increaſed ſo enormouſly as nearly to equal the rental of the land; and, in ſome inſtances, to exceed it. The woollen trade has grown to its preſent magnitude and importance, under the obvious and moſt natural encouragement of laws to keep the raw material at home; and the petitioners have no other wiſh than for a continu-

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ance of this ſecurity, under which they and their anceſtors have ſo ſucceſsfully exerted themſelves.

The Britiſh manufacturers obſerve, with deep concern, that woollens, our ſtaple manufacture, muſt meet the Iriſh woollens in the market of that kingdom, under the weight of a ſpecific, protecting duty, and in our own market, under the preſſure of higher taxes and higher wages; that, "the Britiſh Parliament, by laying a duty of thirty-three pounds per cent. on German linens, and admitting Iriſh, duty free," has given "in effect ſo much bounty on Iriſh linens, their ſtaple manufacture, as the ſame thirty-three pounds per cent. on Iriſh linens would produce;" that this duty on the Linens imported from Ireland, "would amount to a million ſterling; which million, equal almoſt to" the "Peace Eſtabliſhment" of Ireland, is, "in effect raiſed on the Britiſh conſumer, to be paid to the Iriſh linen merchant;" that though Great-Britain raiſes a revenue of five ſhillings and ſix-pence a chaldron on her own coals carried Coaſt-ways, they are to be exported to Ireland duty free.* And when to this ſtriking contraſt of circum-

* The Words between Commas, are copied from the Speech of the Right Honourable Lord Viſcount Caſtlereagh, in the Iriſh Houſe of Commons, February 5th, 1800, Page 31.

ſtances,

ſtances, it is added, that in the arrangement of regulations ſo beneficial for Ireland, the contemplation of the Legiſlature was directed to compenſate the Siſter Kingdom for her conſumption of our woollens, it will afford a very cogent argument in favour of their humble Petition.

It has long been incontrovertibly eſtabliſhed, that one pack of certain ſorts of Engliſh wool, will enable the French to work up two packs of their own, in articles they cannot otherwiſe make. On this account, they are anxious to obtain it by every means in their power; and it is much to be feared, that the extreme difficulty of preventing the ſmuggling of Britiſh wool to France, and to the other rivals of our trade, as well during its paſſage towards Ireland, as from the extenſive coaſts of that iſland, will be very much increaſed. This probable loſs of our ſtaple commodity would be highly detrimental to both countries, and would particularly aggravate the ſufferings and loſs of the Britiſh manufacturers.

The manufacturers and dealers in woollens have property too large and pledges too dear to them, at ſtake, to be for a moment indifferent to the general proſperity and ſafety of the Empire. They hope and expect the moſt beneficial conſequences from an Union with the

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Siſter Kingdom; and if it were poſſible to place both kingdoms on the ſame footing with reſpect to their burthens, they perceive no ground upon which, as liberal men and fellow-ſubjects, they could wiſh to withhold a participation in all the fruits of their long-continued labour and induſtry. But this is not the caſe. It is their own ruin they wiſh to avert. Great Britain pays for the intereſt and charges of her National Debt eighteen times as much as Ireland for her's, which ſhe is to continue excluſively to bear: Ireland is beſides a cheap country, peculiarly adapted for the eſtabliſhment of manufactures. That ſhe may flouriſh, is the ſincere wiſh of every good ſubject; but the Britiſh Manufacturers cannot, without alarm, contemplate the proſpect of their raw material, their machinery, their mercantile and manufacturing capital, and the moſt ingenious of their workmen, migrating to a land where the ſame laws, the ſame language, cheapneſs of labour, and of food, with taxes comparatively nothing, invite them to ſettle and under-ſell thoſe who originally eſtabliſhed the manufactory, and raiſed it to its preſent importance.

The manufacturers of Britiſh wool, are not competent to deſcribe the extended and moſt ruinous political conſequences, which muſt follow

low the decay and deſtruction of our chief manufacture. They have confined their obſervations to what immediately concerns themſelves and their connections. They look forward with apprehenſions, that the exportation of their wools will change the current of their wealth, deſtroy their induſtry and enterprize, deprive the poor of their employment, add to the poor's rates, and diminiſh the rental of the land. Their induſtry and enterprize has hitherto more than kept pace with the public exigencies. They have chearfully borne a large part of the burthens called for by the imperious neceſſity of the times, and it is their earneſt prayer that they may not be deprived of the means of ſupporting it.

Guildhall Coffee-Houſe, April 22, 1800.

No. IV.

SPEECH

OF

EDWARD LAW, Esq.

IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS,

As Counſel for the Petitioners,

On the 1ſt of May, 1800.

My Lords,

I HAVE the honor to attend your Lordſhips on behalf of a moſt important and conſiderable claſs of his Majeſty's ſubjects engaged in the proſecution of the earlieſt and moſt valuable branch of our national commerce, who, approving as they highly and zealouſly do, the general ſyſtem of regulations propoſed to be adopted, in order to conſolidate, ſecure, and improve the

the ſtrength and reſources of two countries, happily united under one common ſovereign; having the ſame general intereſts, habits, and laws, the ſame ſubjects of apprehenſion and danger, and the ſame great objects of policy in reſpect to foreign powers, regret nevertheleſs that this ſyſtem has, in common with other ſyſtems of projected improvement, ſuch a portion of alloy mixed with the advantages and bleſſings which it is in other reſpects calculated (and, we truſt, deſtined alſo) to produce, as in their apprehenſion threatens the deſtruction of thoſe valuable intereſts, which it has been hitherto the wiſdom and policy of this country to protect and encourage—a miſchief certainly not within the immediate contemplation, and ſtill leſs within the intention of the legiſlature to occaſion. They truſt they ſhall not in your Lordſhips' impartial judgment be eſteemed, as ſome have thought fit to pronounce them "a few intereſted individuals," appearing for themſelves only at your Lordſhips' bar; for they appear here not only for themſelves and their own immediate and peculiar intereſt but for the common intereſt, combined with theirs of almoſt the whole aggregate maſs of trades, mechanical arts and manufactures, which this country knows, all of which derive in a conſiderable degree their ſuſtentation and nouriſh-

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ment from this the earlieſt, moſt extenſive, and moſt valuable branch of our national commerce, and ſource of our national proſperity.

To ſtate to your Lordſhips the extent of it, would be to ſtate that it is at leaſt one-third in point of export of the amount of all our national exports; that it is a fourth of the national income, as derived from all its various ſources: its magnitude is ſo important, its connection with the vital and beſt intereſts of this country ſo cloſe and intimate, that it has been a principal object of attention in the framing of the ſtatutes which appear upon your rolls from the earlieſt period of any aſcertained acts of legiſlation in this country. It is however entitled to conſideration not on the ground of any preſcriptive policy reſpecting it, but it is further entitled to conſideration; as it enriches the landholder in the firſt inſtance, by the large rent which it enables his manufacturing tenant to pay for the land he occupies, either for the purpoſes of habitation or trade, and in the enhanced price of every article which this ſoil produces; as it enriches the manufacturer in the ſecond place who works up the wool and conducts it by various hands, and through various proceſſes both of manual and mechanical labour to the ultimate ſtate in which it becomes the ſubject of uſe and wear at home, and of exportation

for ſimilar purpoſes abroad;—as it enriches, in the third place, the dealer and artiſt in every article, which every deſcription of manufacture requires or conſumes from the habitation which protects him from the weather to the ſhoes on which he treads. And laſtly, as it enriches the ſtate itſelf, which derives a larger revenue from the conſumption of ſo many articles, the ſubject of various duties of cuſtoms and exciſe, naturally occaſioned by the demands of a population thus extended and encouraged. In order to give your Lordſhips ſome idea of its magnitude, I may venture to ſtate, that there are no leſs than 1,500,000 perſons who are immediately concerned in the operative branches of this vaſt manufacture; and if what Doctor Campbell in his Political Survey of the Kingdom, vol. ii. p. 157, ſtates be true, "That from the wool grower to the conſumer a piece of broad cloth paſſes through an hundred different hands; and that there are near the ſame number of hands dependant on the woollen manufacture though not actually concerned in it," I may aſſume that the trade directly and collaterally employs double the above-mentioned number of hands.

If we eſtimate then the magnitude of this queſtion, according to the number of perſons intereſted

intereſted in it; it goes to nearly one-third of the intire population of this kingdom, eſtimating that population at what it is generally reckoned, namely, between nine and ten millions of perſons. If we look at its annual produce, at its value and amount with reſpect both to foreign markets and home conſumption, without ſtating in minute detail the quantity of wool actually produced in this country, it amounts at leaſt to 600,000 packs, each pack being of the value of £.11 conſtituting a total of £.6,600,000 of actual produce, before it begins to be manufactured; and in its manufactured ſtate, upon the ſmalleſt and moſt contracted eſtimate, being upon an average at leaſt tripled in its value; ſome of it which undergoes a more laboured and expenſive proceſs, is of infinitely greater value, in proportion to the raw material, than what I have ſtated, but upon an average the actual quantity of annually manufactured goods is three times the amount laſt mentioned, that is £.19,800,000, or perhaps from that ſum to twenty millions of ſubſtantial and annually produced capital to the country. What branch of trade belonging to this country is there that offers itſelf in ſuch a ſhape to the conſideration of your Lordſhips? I am therefore well aſſured that the application now made, and the repre-

ſentation, which through their advocates, and by their evidence the Petitioners now ſeek to impreſs upon the minds of your Lordſhips will be received with the patience and attention which a ſubject of ſuch tranſcendent importance ſeems to merit.

My Lords, I have principally conſidered, at preſent, the intereſt which individuals have, as perſonally connected in the profits of this trade. But, my Lords, conſidered with a reference to the revenue, it aſſumes a ſtill more intereſting aſpect; it imports the country to conſider moſt ſeriouſly before they put it in hazard,—and I am ſure this Houſe, at leaſt, will conſider it deeply and maturely; becauſe, my Lords, you are not now engaged in the diſcuſſion of a queſtion of fluctuating policy, which you may adopt to-day and renounce to-morrow; where, if there be any error in the principle itſelf, or in the means by which it is attempted to be carried into effect, it may, as in ordinary caſes, be remedied by other and later acts of legiſlature. But the reſolution which your Lordſhips ſhall pronounce to-day, as it will form one of the terms of that Union and confederation which is to be perpetual and unchangeable between the two nations, will be itſelf an irreverſible reſolution. There remains no competent

petent power in Parliament, ſo long as this Union ſhall endure, (and God grant that, when formed, it may endure for ever) of reconſidering the vote you ſhall come to upon the preſent queſtion; for the United Parliament will poſſeſs no intrinſic means; nor, of courſe, can provide or reſerve for itſelf any extrinſic reſort, for the cure and redreſs of ſuch an inconvenience, and therefore your Lordſhips are now to reſolve, upon the ſubject before you, once and for ever. Your Petitioners feel themſelves warranted therefore, in earneſtly ſoliciting your Lordſhips maturely to conſider that which ſo deeply intereſts them, and which, when reſolved, admits of no palliation or amendment. Conſider, my Lords, what has been the well-weighed and long-ſettled policy of your anceſtors upon this ſubject. This is not a new trade, nor is it only a comparatively ancient trade; but it is the moſt ancient and the moſt important trade which the country poſſeſſes, which is, as my Lord Hale calls it, "The baſis of all your commerce."—It is that to which the earlieſt and moſt anxious attention of Parliament has been at all times directed, in a variety of regulations adopted indeed according to fluctuating ſyſtems of policy at different periods, but for a period now of more than two hun-

dred years ſteadily directed to one point, ſteadily looking at the excluſive manufacture of our native wool, as the fixed principle and polar ſtar of our commercial ſyſtem, the principle being that this raw material, capable of being manufactured to ſo much advantage, contributing in ſo many various ways to the reſources, advantage, and conſequence of the ſtate, as far as regards foreign powers, ſupplying ſo abundantly the materials of ſtrength, both in reſpect of population and finance to ourſelves, ſhould be incommunicable to any other nation.—And I am to ſubmit, on the part of your Petitioners, that the moment this Reſolution, which is propoſed to your Lordſhips for adoption, ſhall be, if (which God forbid) it ſhall be adopted, will open a door to indefinite contraband, will open a door which it will exceed your ſtrength to ſhut.—When once the door is thrown open to the world at large, by the exportation of Britiſh wool to the coaſts of Ireland, it will be impoſſible afterwards, by any regulations you can apply to the ſubject, by the vigilance of even a greater navy than you poſſeſs, or of officers of the revenue, much more numerous than any exiſting hoſt of them, to prevent the clandeſtine exportation of wool from that country to the reſt of the world.

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This valuable article of trade was firſt taken notice of in our Statutes, I believe in the time of Edward the Firſt. Our ſtatutes of which we have any account, go ſo little beyond that period, that we are not able to ſtate much of what had been done upon the ſubject before. Lord Hale, who has purſued that ſubject as he has all others with an induſtry of reſearch and an accuracy of inveſtigation peculiar to that great man, finds that in 13 Edward I. there was, for the firſt time, a grant to the crown of a duty upon wool, wool fells, &c. for at that time, in the infancy of our commerce, it was the policy of this country to permit wool to be exported, and it then, for the firſt time, became the ſubject of financial regulation, and a ſource of revenue to the crown. At that time, when there was no adequate conſumption for ſuch an article, it muſt have periſhed and been uſeleſs to every body if its export had not been allowed; but the export of a raw material capable of being manufactured in the country is only allowable upon any juſt principles of political reaſon in the very infancy and feebleneſs of national commerce; from the moment it can be manufactured at home it becomes the policy of the country to apply the labour, the ſkill, and the induſtry of its ſubjects upon the

material itſelf, and to export it at laſt in the moſt advanced and perfect ſtate of workmanſhip, having embodied in it the wages paid for all the labour, ſkill, and induſtry of the inhabitants of the country which have been employed upon it, comprehending, of courſe, the taxes paid to the ſtate itſelf by the manufacturers and others who have earned the wages which conſtitute ſo conſiderable a part of the price of the article exported. It was not till a later period of our hiſtory that we have been fully able to adopt that policy; but in the time of Edward III. we find ſeveral ſtatutes totally prohibiting, under enormous penalties, the exportation of wool. In 11 Edward III. the exportation of wool, by denizens or ſtrangers, is forbidden, under pain of death. In the 15 Edward III. a change of policy ſeems to have taken place, and liberty was then given to all merchants to export wools, paying the ancient cuſtoms. Within a ſhort period afterwards, by the ſtatute of the Staple, 27 Edward III. c. 1 and 2, merchant ſtrangers were allowed to buy wool at the ſtaples to tranſport them; but by c. 3, Engliſh, Welch, and Iriſh were prohibited to tranſport wools, under pain of death and loſs of goods and lands. Afterwards by the ſtatute of 38 Edward III. c. 6,

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the penalty of death upon tranſportation of wool was repealed, but the forfeiture of lands and goods was continued in force; and from that period to the preſent, Britiſh wool has been, with little interruption, the ſubject of general prohibition as an article of export. In the reign of Elizabeth, the exportation of live ſheep was alſo prohibited with a view to prevent the carrying the original foundation of the manufacture itſelf out of the country.

This was prohibited by the penalty of loſs of land, and by other penalties. From that time down to the laſt ſtatute, the 12th of Charles II. the exportation of wool has been the ſubject of repeated prohibitions, under ſeveral heavy penalties, which have continued unrepealed from that time to the preſent moment. Thus it has been the ſteady policy of this country from the time of queen Elizabeth at leaſt; for in the time of her predeceſſor Mary, we loſt by the capture of Calais the laſt foreign ſtaple for our wool which was fixed at that place. Since that time it has been the continued and invariable policy of the moſt enlightened ſtateſmen in all periods of our hiſtory, to appropriate excluſively the wool of our country to the looms of our own manufacturers, to work it up wholly ourſelves, and to weave, if I may ſay ſo, the wages of our

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ſkill and of our labour into its very fabric, and make the foreign conſumer pay the price of that ſkill and labour, together with the taxes of the manufacturer into the bargain, thereby making the whole redound to the private gain and advantage of the manufacturer, and merchant in the firſt inſtance, and to that of the State in the laſt: when I ſay it has been the policy of the moſt enlightened ſtateſmen upon this ſubject, I allude particularly to a letter of advice written by the great Lord Bacon * to Sir George Villiers, who was at that time immediately about to be elevated by his ſovereign king James the firſt, to the high ſtation and dignities he afterwards ſo long held.—It is a letter full of the ſoundeſt and beſt inſtruction, in all points calculated to prepare and fit him for the exerciſe of the high public duties which he was about to have in charge. Among other things in addreſſing his advice to the future miniſter of his Sovereign upon the ſubject of our commerce; and in ſpeaking of this very trade, he emphatically recommends the encouragement of our woollen manufactures in the following terms:—"Let us advance the native commodities of our own kingdom, and employ our

* Vol. I. p. 727.

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own countrymen before ſtrangers: let us turn the wools of the lands into cloaths and ſtuffs of our own growth; it would ſet many thouſand hands on work, and thereby one of the materials would by induſtry be multiplied to five, ten, and many times to twenty-five times more in the value being wrought."

This line of policy from the time when it was thus recommended, has, as far as we can trace it in our ſtatute book, been regularly and uniformly obſerved ever ſince, and it would heretofore have ſeemed a ſort of political hereſy of no very venial kind to have intimated a doubt, whether permitting the exportation of this moſt valuable raw material would be injurious to the intereſts of our country.

But it may be aſked, how does the permitted exportation of wool to Ireland neceſſarily involve the communication of it to foreign countries? My Lords, do not ſuffer yourſelves to be deceived on this head: the moment that wool is made the ſubject of allowed export to Ireland, it is not all your dockets and your clearances, or any other ſyſtem of check which can be deviſed, that will inſure that the veſſels laden therewith ſhall go to Ireland at all. All Europe and all America is open to them: but ſuppoſing that it even does go to Ireland in the

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firſt inſtance, when it has got there, what is to prevent its being re-exported to any other part of the world? The navy of Great Britain is not ſufficient to ſhut up the multitude of other ports with which that country abounds, and from which this lucrative article of contraband might be ſpeedily and eaſily diffuſed over the neighbouring nations of Europe. Its geographical ſituation in reſpect to France, renders it peculiarly eaſy with reſpect to that country. It therefore imports your Lordſhips to conſider the propoſed Reſolution, in all its conſequences, as involving the queſtion of unlimited communication of this raw material to the whole world. For ſuch will be the mediate, if not the immediate and direct conſequence of this meaſure. If indeed, which is not the caſe, a redundancy of wool exiſted, and there was more wool in the market than our looms could conveniently occupy, it might become a queſtion of diſputable policy perhaps, whether this redundancy ſhould not be ſuffered to diſcharge itſelf into foreign markets, but even ſo, I humbly conceive, the evil of foreign ſale would preponderate. It would not be wiſe to habituate foreigners to carry on a manufacture, in the excluſive monopoly of which we are ſo deeply intereſted: the redundancy of one year might be well

well ſaved to ſupply the natural and probable deficiencies of another; but ſituated as we now are with an actual pinching ſcarcity of this article, which has decreaſed, and is yet decreaſing—is it politic, is it rational, to give to others that which we want ourſelves? To export, in order to reimport at an enhanced price, with accumulated freights and commiſſion upon the article, for that muſt be the caſe, inaſmuch as our looms demand a greater ſupply at preſent than the produce of our own country, yet undiminiſhed by the participation of others, yields them. This deficiency muſt be ſupplied, if poſſible, *aliunde*; and if we increaſe this deficiency ſtill further by exporting our own, if it is permitted to be diſſipated either in the ſhape of authorized commerce, or to eſcape in the way of contraband, it muſt be brought back or replaced under circumſtances moſt injurious to the manufacturers, and ultimately to every purchaſer of woollen goods in the country.

But it may be ſaid, Is it a fact that the quantity is diminiſhing? My Lords, we are prepared to ſubſtantiate that fact at your bar, by the moſt irrefragable evidence. The quantity that this country did produce, at a period no farther diſtant from the preſent than the year 1740, according to reports made to the Treaſury

ſury in that year, was no leſs than 738,000 packs. The quantity now produced is barely 600,000, and the demand infinitely exceeds the quantity produced. Let us then at leaſt uſe our own wool to the extent in which it may be capable of ſupplying our wants. There is certainly a conſiderable addition to our manufacturing ſtock derived from Spaniſh wool; if a ſtill further addition could be made to this, would any man doubt of making it, inſtead of laviſhly communicating our meagre and ſcanty ſtore to other nations, greedy to participate in profits which we excluſively derive from it at preſent?

From what cauſes, it may be aſked, does this decreaſe ariſe? From many obvious ones; within theſe few years laſt paſt, large tracts of country have been incloſed, over which the ſheep were before uſed to ſtray at large, and in that wider range of paſture, the animal, from its habit of life, acquired that quality of fleece which is called the ſhort wool, peculiarly fitted for our beſt fabrics. Whereas in the richer and more luxuriant paſtures, which incloſed and improved lands uſually afford, every body acquainted with the ſubject knows, that a longer and much leſs uſeful quality of fleece is produced, wholly inapplicable to the texture and formation

formation of finer cloths. The immediate tendency, and actual effect of all theſe incloſures, is to produce an animal bearing a fleece of what is called the longer ſort of wool, ſuch as the ſheep in the county of Lincoln are particularly noted for, and which, as I before ſaid, is not fit for the finer fabrics, but only for thoſe of a coarſer and leſs valuable texture. The quantity of fine wool is in conſequence of theſe incloſures hourly diminiſhing; and from the proviſions adopted in moſt Incloſure Bills, the miſchief is enhanced: for it is provided in moſt of them, that a certain large proportion of the land incloſed ſhould be devoted to arable purpoſes, which of courſe diminiſhes the quantity of what was before occupied wholly as paſture, beſides the very melioration of the ſoil itſelf diminiſhes in the way I have already ſtated the quantity of finer wool. If it be ſaid, are you arguing againſt the policy of Incloſures, and of making ſuch regulations reſpecting them as have a tendency to produce a more ample ſupply of corn for the ſuſtentation of the community? certainly I am not. We do not deſire that an article of ſuch primary neceſſity as bread corn, that the immediate aliment of the country ſhould be diminiſhed in favour of any branch of commerce, how valuable ſoever, for all commerce

muſt

muſt be ſubordinate in point of importance to the vital ſupport of the inhabitants of the country. We only ſtate ſuch to be the conſequence of Incloſures, and of the diminiſhed quantity of paſture land, and that the total quantity of wool produced in this country is materially decreaſed by this circumſtance. The whole ſoil of the country is in effect divided into paſture and corn land. If from an increaſed population you are obliged to appropriate more land to the growth of corn, you of courſe have leſs left to be employed as paſture; and if beſides this you make the very paſture land which remains more fertile and productive than before, you make it nearly in the ſame proportion leſs favourable to the growth of fine wool. Nor is the quantity of wool grown very eaſily capable of increaſe; no man will breed ſheep for the ſake of their wool. The fleece conſtitutes but a ſeventh or eighth part of the total value of the animal. It is upon the carcaſe that its value principally depends, and therefore the farmer will not breed more ſheep than he can find a demand for by ſale of the carcaſe. The profit to be gained from the ſale of the carcaſe, therefore muſt neceſſarily limit and regulate the quantity of ſheep that will be fed throughout the whole of the country, and

from

from the increaſe of corn land. Amongſt other cauſes there has been a decreaſe in the growth of fine wool, which has been materially felt for four or five years paſt; and there is at preſent ſuch a degree of actual ſcarcity in this article, that the manufacturer, who at the ſame ſeaſon of the year could have found a ſtock in hand for ſeveral months to come, finds, upon applications made at the uſual places of ſupply, a total dearth and deſtitution of the article, and an incapacity of procuring a ſupply of ſo ſmall a quantity comparatively as ſeventy packs of a particular ſpecies of wool;—all the traders in this great capital not being able to furniſh the comparatively minute demand that I have ſtated. There exiſts then an actual dearth of this article. It is no anſwer that the increaſing demand from an increaſed population, or a more extended foreign trade, makes more to be required now than formerly. If it does ſo, why in God's name do we not confine to our own uſe excluſively all that we have. By communicating the raw material to other nations, we can get but one miſerable ſolitary graſp of profit in the outright ſale of it; but by keeping it at home, and manufacturing it in the various proceſſes it undergoes, and by employing upon it the various hands through which it paſſes, the State re-

ceives an increaſe of advantage in almoſt an hundred fold proportion.

But it is ſaid, what danger is there that this country will be diſpoſſeſſed of this commerce, ſuppoſing the propoſed reſolution to be carried into effect? are we not, it is ſaid, ſecured by what is certainly an important circumſtance, the prime-occupancy and almoſt entire poſſeſſion of the trade? are we not inſured in the enjoyment of it by the poſſeſſion of capital which no other nation has equal to our own. Are we not ſecured in it by the poſſeſſion of an art and ſkill in the manufacture itſelf, and by a knowledge and facility in the various proceſſes of which it conſiſts, which is not yet communicated, and which ſome may ſay is incommunicable in an equal degree to other nations.

Let us not upon this latter ſubject deceive ourſelves. At the time when the woollen manufactures were eſtabliſhed in this country, in the reign of queen Elizabeth, the manufacturers and the manufacture were neceſſarily imported together at that time, it was purely a manual art, when the artiſans of Flanders and Brabant, flying from the impolitic perſecutions of the houſe of Auſtria, under the duke of Alva, took refuge in this country; they brought their art with them, and hands already

trained

trained to the art communicated the practical uſe and knowledge of it to others. It was only then to be acquired by a long and laborious practice of it as a merely manual art; but now it is become a manufacture, in which manual ſkill has a comparatively ſmall effect and concern; a few hands can now do all that belongs to ſkill, of the operation the reſt is become matter of mere mechanical labour, and the greateſt part of the perſons engaged about the work are merely employed to watch and ſuperintend, and occaſionally to direct the action of the machine, and are thus rather attendants upon the machine, and ſubordinate to it, than the great efficient inſtruments and cauſes of the labour itſelf. This is an alteration which the highly improved ſtate of machinery in this country has produced; and I am ſure I am ſpeaking within limits when I ſtate that the diminution of hands employed is at leaſt in the proportion of three perſons out of four, within the ſhort period of little more than twenty years; is not this art more eaſily transferable from place to place than it was formerly? If there be ſufficient inducement held forth to prevail upon a few principal manufacturers to go to Ireland, or to any other part of the world, where is the difficulty of tranſporting

the art itſelf? all the machinery that is now uſed at Leeds, or Huddersfield, or in any other neighbourhood where the manufacture is carried on in the largeſt extent, may be had at the ſame coſt which is paid for it there—nay the new adventurer cannot only have all the machinery that is at preſent uſed in theſe places, but even more than it has been conſidered ſafe to introduce into common uſe, in a country already ſtocked with manufacturers: for there are other machines beſides what are in general uſe, that are capable of being applied to the manufacture, in ſome of its proceſſes, which would ſtill further abridge the uſe of manual labour, but from the unpopularity attending the introduction of them, they have not been yet ventured upon in ſome countries, where the manufactures are carried on in their moſt conſiderable extent: they would export therefore the manufacture into Ireland with every advantage, and to what ſort of country is it to be tranſported? Is it to a country diſſimilar to this in the produce of materials for the manufacture, and in the conveniencies for carrying it on? Good God! it is a country equally fit from climate and other circumſtances to be the ſeat of this very manufacture, and in ſome reſpects

infinitely

infinitely more favorable and alluring to the projects of adventure and ſpeculation.

The manufacturer in Ireland is not obliged, as a perſon ſetting up his trade in Wiltſhire, or Glouceſterſhire would be, to buy that which is the ſubject of conſiderable price in the outſet; that which has been tranſmitted from father and ſon as a valuable inheritance, as for inſtance, the ſcite upon which mills are erected, the uſe of ſtreams and water-courſes, and other matters ſubſidiary to the manufacture. Inſtead of having to buy them as they muſt be bought in the ſettled parts of a country, where manufactures have been long domiciled, the commercial adventurer has the field open to him at no expence whatever, or comparatively none. Has that country equal advantages in reſpect of water? I am inſtructed that it has at leaſt equal advantage in ſtreams to ſupply mills and to put manufacture in motion in all its proceſſes. It is ſaid, perhaps, they have not coals equally cheap as with us, but coals are principally uſeful only in performing thoſe operations which may be performed by water, where there is a ſufficient ſupply of it. The great conſumption of coals which we have heard of, is occaſioned by the uſe of fire engines, where the manufacturers have not adequate ſupplies of water to work

their mills, and put the machinery in motion: therefore if even coals were more wanted in Ireland than they are, and which I will ſhew your Lordſhips, is not in any great degree the caſe, they will ſuffer no ſubſtantial inconvenience, becauſe there is a ſupply of water, which diſpenſes with the occaſion for them. But ſuppoſing they were under that inconvenience in reſpect to their mills, what is really the difference in the price of coals to a perſon importing them from Liverpool, who reſides at Dublin or Newry, from the expenſe in the ſame article of a manufacturer reſiding in the neighbourhood of Saddleworth. The freight of coals from Liverpool to Dublin or Newry, is five ſhillings per ton: the price of coals fluctuates from ſeven ſhillings and ſixpence to ten ſhillings; add the price of the freight to that, and it makes the price of coals, when tranſported to the ports of Ireland, from twelve ſhillings and ſixpence to fifteen ſhillings per ton. What is the price of that article in the moſt manufacturing and increaſing parts of Yorkſhire?—at Saddleworth it is from fourteen to fifteen ſhillings: therefore the difference is not an article upon which any ſtreſs can be laid, when compared and contraſted with the other great preponderating advantages which belong to Ireland, and which I will

will take the liberty of ſtating to your Lordſhips. What then are the peculiar advantages of Ireland on this ſubject? In the firſt place, the wages to be paid to their men are not half the amount of thoſe in England; the manufacturers in Ireland, from their more frugal habits of living, being accuſtomed to much humbler and coarſer fare than our manufacturers require. In the price of labour, therefore, which is the great conſtituent article of expence in the proſecution of every manufacture, Ireland has an infinite advantage over us, and there is not one other article, excepting the ſolitary article of coals, upon which I have obſerved already, and in which there is at the moſt the difference of two or three ſhillings in the ton againſt them,—there is not, I ſay, one article, in which Ireland has not the advantage, in point of cheapneſs, over Saddleworth and many other parts of Yorkſhire, where this manufacture is carried on to the greateſt extent.

In Ireland every article of immediate ſubſiſtence and food is infinitely cheaper than with us. Providence has given them the fineſt ſtreams and falls of water in the world, in aid of machinery; and this latter advantage may be had at a price next to nothing, for theſe matters are not yet occupied and appreciated as they are

with us, where the purchaſe of them requires a large original capital in the hands of the manufacturer. They may be occupied at preſent in Ireland by any firſt comer who may chooſe to fix his ſtaff there. Every article of conſumption connected with the manfacture, may be had there for nothing, compared with what the ſame article coſts here: conſider too the magnitude of our taxes, as compared with thoſe of Ireland. They are to pay for fifteen years, two parts out of ſeventeen of the aggregate amount of our common taxation, whilſt Great Britain is to bear the other fifteen ſeventeenth parts. Does that conſtitute no difference? Let us eſtimate the average contribution to the total amount of taxes paid by an individual in the one country, and the other for this purpoſe; let us ſuppoſe Great Britain to conſiſt of a population of ten millions, and Ireland of four millions, and let us aſſume for the purpoſe of this eſtimate, the total permanent taxes to be according to an account laid upon the table of another houſe, on the 5th of January laſt, that is to ſay, thoſe of Great Britain, 26,349,000l. and a fraction, and thoſe of Ireland, 1,860,000l and a fraction, the relative proportion of contribution, *per capita*, between man and man, in each country, in England is £2 3*s*. 4*d*. per head,

head, in Ireland only 9s. 4d.—Does not this make a deciſive difference? and will not this advantage carry away all our manufactures before it?—Does not this difference of taxation alone infinitely counterbalance all others, if even there exiſted ſuch on the part of England. It is not to be named with the paltry difference of two or three ſhillings in the price of a ton of coals, particularly too as coals are not neceſſary to be uſed for any act in the direct proceſs of the manufacture, nor in any matter ſubſiduary thereto, where there exiſts a ſufficient ſupply of water, as there does very generally in Ireland.

Is it then to be treated as an idle jealouſy, as a vain apprehenſion, that this trade may tranſfer itſelf to Ireland, and are we to be duped into a perſuaſion, that the mere actual poſſeſſion of this trade, in the extent to which we now carry it on, is a circumſtance ſufficient to rivet and fix our dominion over it for ever; to laſh it, and faſten it, to the ſhores of Great Britain, without riſk or hazard of change or removal? We are ignorant, if we ſo argue, of what is actually taking place in Ireland at this moment. Ireland is in poſſeſſion, beneficially in poſſeſſion to an immenſe extent, of this very manufacture; and it is only in conſequence of what has been under-

underſtood to be the ſettled and arranged policy of the two countries (not indeed in conſequence of regulations formally made, or of faith ſolemnly pledged between the two parties, but which however, by tacit underſtanding, has had the effect of a compact between them, in conſideration of this country having conferred upon Ireland the benefits it has liberally and abundantly communicated to it, in the article of linens) that Ireland ſhould not be, and it accordingly has not been a competitor with Great Britain, from the time of king William, in the exportation of woollens, and England has alone exported what produces annually a return of eight millions and a half to foreign countries. What is conſumed in our own country, being in proportion of five to four to this export, amounts to about eleven or twelve millions more. Ireland however is in poſſeſſion of the woollen manufacture for the purpoſes of its own conſumption, and that foſtered and encouraged in a particular manner by its own legiſlature. Every article of woollen with which the whole military ſervice of Ireland is clothed is of their own manufacture, and is ſo required to be by acts of their legiſlature. They are in poſſeſſion of this manufacture; they are in poſſeſſion of it uſefully and beneficially, and can carry it on to

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any extent which the terms between the two nations may admit of, which extent is indefinite under the propoſed articles. The linens exported from Ireland into this country amount annually to the ſum of £2,364,096 ſterling, and there being a duty upon German linens, their only competitors in the market, to that amount, operates directly as a bounty on the importation of the ſame article from Ireland.

I know in another place, in another kingdom, it has been ſaid, by perſons in high authority there, that this was not ſtrictly a compact, but it is not denied that it might be ſo in the underſtanding of the two nations: that they may have formed their reſpective financial arrangements accordingly.—But the Iriſh are told that the bounty on the exportation of their linens ſhould be continued to them, and that they ſhould have an unlimitted ſhare in the woollen manufactures, with the advantage of importing the raw material from Great Britain, beſides the advantage of protecting duty. Is there any thing of equality in this, that they ſhall have both the *quid* and the *pro quo*, both the purchaſe-money and the eſtate; that they ſhall have this bounty upon their linens, the conſideration for the ceſſion of any intereſt in the woollens, and an equal ſhare in the woollen

trade

trade into the bargain? It does not ſeem to the Britiſh woollen manufacturer, repreſenting his ſhare in the Britiſh intereſts at your Lordſhips bar, that this is any thing like a fair partition between the Siſter Kingdom in this particular, but that the youngeſt ſiſter ſeems to have outwitted her elder in the diviſion of their common funds. This ſeems not to be very fair dealing towards Great Britain; but I am not ſtating it as a matter of general complaint, or any otherwiſe than as it bears upon the woollen trade, and ſhews that the Iriſh have the advantage of ſo much commerce, in effect excluſively their own; as well as the advantage of protecting duties in reſpect to that in which they are conſidered as merely joint ſharers with us. In what reſpect then, and upon what principle can the trade be ſaid to be carried on upon an equal footing by Great Britain and Ireland, in the article of woollens?

I ſhall be told that the expence of exporting wool from England to Ireland will be great, and that this circumſtance will operate to the diſadvantage of the Iriſh manufacturer in favor of the Engliſh. How is that fact at preſent? The Iriſhman who may buy wool in Devonſhire or Cornwall, and export it in a direct courſe upon a ſingle wind, as he may to Cork

or

or any of the ſouthern parts of Ireland, will have an advantage over an Engliſh merchant reſiding at Leeds or other parts of Yorkſhire, of 25 per cent. in the conveyance of this article to the place of its manufacture. Wool is, I underſtand, generally conveyed to Leeds from London by land, in order to avoid the inconvenience of a more circuitious conveyance by water, and the differences to the prejudice of the Engliſh manufacturer ariſing from this circumſtance alone, will be at leaſt 25 per cent. in the article of freight.

It may be ſaid, I have choſen an extreme point of the coaſt, taking a caſe of extreme diſadvantage to the Yorkſhire manufacturer. I will take it nearer, I will take Hampſhire or Suſſex; there it will be a diſadvantage of twenty ſhillings and nine-pence to the Engliſh manufacturer, as compared with the ſituation of the Iriſh manufacturer in reſpect of the ſame article. But I have been conſidering only the freights from the country where wool is grown, to places where it is to be worked up and manufactured. I will now conſider the freights from Ireland to the places where this manufacture, when made up, is to be vended.—From the advantageous ſituation for foreign commerce of the ſouth-eaſt part of Ireland, the freights are

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leſs in the proportion of 20 per cent. or near 25 per cent. than they would be from moſt parts of Great Britain.—Then it is not a chance whether Ireland will hereafter have the manufacture.—Ireland has it the moment it is civilized—Ireland has it the moment it has protecting laws—Ireland has it, becauſe I truſt there will then be an equal degree of ſecurity in both countries for the enjoyment of civil rights and private property. It will acquire by the mere effect of ſuperior cheapneſs of living, by the mere circumſtance of an equal adminiſtration of the laws, by mere ſecurity of poſſeſſion to property, abundant advantages in the cultivation and proſecution of this manufacture over what Great Britain now poſſeſſes or can acquire at any future period.

But it is ſaid ſtill, there is ſomething behind which will diſable Ireland from materially affecting the Britiſh intereſts in the woollen manufacture; that until capital is taught to flow in that channel, until people have habitually connected themſelves with that commerce, until you can raiſe up ſuch eſtabliſhed houſes in Ireland, as conſtitute the great ſtrength and conſequence of the commercial world in this country, nothing will be done that can materially endanger the ſuperiority of Great Britain.—Is

that

that ſo? Is this a country ſo deſtitute of ſpirit, of adventure, as not to furniſh abundance of perſons willing to transfer their capital into other channels, when they can do ſo with reaſonable ſafety and with reaſonable proſpect of advantage? When the return of peace ſhall, by the increaſed value of funded property, have occaſioned a redundancy of monied capital beyond what can be conveniently occupied in mortgages or ordinary loans, or what can find a vent for itſelf in the purchaſe of land, the exceſs muſt be thrown into the channel of commerce, as its natural and obvious diſcharge. If the channels of commerce in this country are completely filled, they will diſcharge their ſuperabundance into thoſe of the Siſter Kingdom.—The want of capital then will not upon the return of peace and the eſtabliſhment of order and good government in that country be a complaint of long duration. Whilſt we have the means of working up our own native materials in our own manufactures, the policy of doing which was never doubted, I believe, till very lately by any perſon competent to conſider the true ſyſtem of the commercial economy and intereſts of this country. And the learned writer upon that ſubject, whoſe name I have alluded to already, Doctor Campbell, ſpeaking of the

policy

policy of this country as to wool, ſays,* "If one may be allowed to ſpeak freely on ſo delicate and ſo important a point, the caſe ſeems to be this—The Britiſh dominions, in proportion to their extent, produce more wool than the reſt of Europe. We endeavour, and wiſely, to avail ourſelves of this advantage, "By keeping it at home (as much as in us lies) we keep the material low, while the reſt of Europe being, in compariſon with us, in a ſtate of want, give an higher price for our wool than it will fetch at home, and this in ſpite of all our penal ſtatutes; they by this advanced price obtain, and it is to be feared they will always obtain it, till by an augmentation of our inhabitants, and the extenſion of our commerce, we ourſelves are enabled to work it all, which ought therefore to be the conſtant and aſſiduous object of our councils and our endeavours."

What this Author, who wrote about twenty years ago, or rather publiſhed then, what he had meditated and written long before—for it was the digeſted compilation and labour of a long life; what he looked forward to in the ſpirit of patriotic prophecy, is now fully accompliſhed—that ſtate of commercial proſperity in

* In note, p. 161. of his work.

which

which we are able to work up, with our own looms, every particle of our own native wool has now arrived.

Quod optanti divûm promittere nemo auderet, volvenda dies en attulit ultrò,—and yet, my Lords, in this ſituation of bleſſed pre-eminence above the nations around us, ſtanding as we do upon this pinnacle of commercial proſperity, it ſeems to be the dangerous policy of the preſent hour to precipitate ourſelves from it, and to deſtroy at once all the advantages, which it has been the wiſdom of our anceſtors, through a long courſe of ages, to procure for us, by reſolutely retaining the ſole and excluſive manufacture of this native and moſt important article of Britiſh commerce.

My Lords, I will not treſpaſs much more at length upon your time. It has been my duty to lay before your Lordſhips the principles upon which the Petitioners contend, that the allowance of an indefinite exportation to Ireland of the raw material will be deſtructive of their great commercial intereſts: intereſts undertaken and committed upon the expected continuance of that ſyſtem, which it has been the policy of our anceſtors for ſo many generations, to adopt and continue;—upon a faith pledged to them by the diſtinct and expreſſive language of

many acts of parliament. For disapproving, as they do, of the extreme rigour which belongs to the penalties of some of our early laws; they construe them nevertheless as strongly though coarsely expressive of the clear sense which our ancestors entertained of the well-weighed policy of continuing exclusively to Great Britain the benefits of this manufacture. They do not wish to re-enact or enforce the several penalties of past times, but they wish that a policy which stands sanctioned and approved by the wisdom of antecedent ages, and has continued to the present hour, should not be hastily superseded.

What effect such an alteration would have upon the country at large, is beyond all limit in point of calculation to pronounce. The sudden and capricious transfer of commercial advantage, from one hand to another, is on all occasions mischievous: it is what all prudent statesmen would avoid: it occasions infinite confusion, misery, and derangement, in civil, social, and domestic life. The sudden influx of wealth upon those who have not tasted it before, injures and corrupts the persons who are the objects of that sudden influx; and it is ruinous in its effects to the individuals and to the country deprived of that commerce which was before its proper maintenance and support.

When

When the manufacture of wool firſt took its reſidence in this country, it ſeated itſelf immediately oppoſite to thoſe provinces, from whence the woollen trade had been before removed. I mean in the counties of Eſſex and Suffolk, where it has continued till the preſent time, but has of late lingered there in a ſtate of decay. You will have it in evidence that the effect of that decay has been to enhance the poor-rates in thoſe diſtricts, the ſeat of the ancient ſettlement of this manufacture, to an enormous amount: indeed ſuch as I am almoſt afraid to ſtate, though I believe I ſhall prove it. I am inſtructed, that the poor-rates have encreaſed in the pariſh of Bocking in Eſſex, where this manufacture formerly flouriſhed, from eight ſhillings in the pound to the enormous ſum of 24s. 6d. in the pound upon the rentals within five years laſt paſt; and in the pariſh of Lavenham in Suffolk, and ſome adjoining pariſhes, it has encreaſed to the amount of 32s. in the pound.—This is the immediate and unqueſtionable conſequence of the ſubtraction of the manufacture from theſe places. The conſequence will and muſt be the ſame, but in a ſtill larger and more pernicious extent, when the great populous diſtricts of the country which have been paid and fed by this manufacture,

ſhall have ſubſtracted from them the materials of their induſtry and the ſources of their ſupport; when there ſhall be withdrawn, for inſtance, from that part of the county of York, which is now enriched by the induſtry of a thriving and populous tenantry, thoſe manufactures from which all the riches and all the population I have mentioned is derived. Suppoſing ſuch a decline of the woollen manufactures in this country, as I have been conſidering, to take place, the manufacturer will either follow the manufacture to happier climes, or he will ſtay here. If he follows it, he is loſt to the community and public relations of this country with which he was before connected: if he ſtays here, he remains to taſte the bitterneſs of deſponding poverty, and to become burthenſome to the neighbourhood in which he lived, for want of any adequate means of maintenance. The country itſelf will be again reduced to its original ſtate of wilderneſs and waſte, from which, in many parts, it was recently reclaimed, by the introduction of theſe very manufactures; when the ſtreams which before had waſted and ſcattered themſelves in unprofitable abundance, were firſt collected and drawn together to give motion, activity, and effect to millions of wheels, and thus collaterally employing a multitude of

hands

hands of all ages and deſcriptions in the conduct and furtherance of theſe manufactures. It is by the aid of, and in connection with this valuable and multiplied machinery, that youth anticipates the period of its own uſefulneſs, and age prolongs it.

The ſame cauſe which has added abundance and opulence to the manufacturer, has equally tended to enrich the land-owners, by raiſing the rents of their lands in every diſtrict, connected with the ſupply of thoſe articles which the manufacturers conſume. Theſe will now be thrown back again into a ſtate of comparative poverty and wretchedneſs; and thus the whole fabric upon which the proſperity of the commercial, and the advantages of the landed intereſt have reſted for ſo many years, will be at once annihilated and deſtroyed.

My Lords, before we incur the riſk of having theſe miſchiefs entailed upon us to the lateſt generations, your Lordſhips, in this untried matter,—this great ſubject upon which you are now to meditate and reſolve, for the firſt and the laſt time, will think, no doubt, with that degree of mature deliberation and reflection which befits the criſis in which we are placed, and the importance of that deciſion which you are about to form.

I know it may be ſaid, that much of this expectation of miſchief is viſionary; and

that ſince the Union with Scotland, although it has been open to that kingdom, to puſh theſe manufactures to any indefinite extent; yet it has not done ſo, and that the conduct of Ireland will probably be the ſame.

Now, my Lords, without adverting to the ſituation of Scotland, which was for a long time torn with local diſtractions and diſturbances which rendered it wholly unfit to receive and promote any great ſcheme of commercial improvement, I am inſtructed that its climate is not equally favourable to the ſeveral proceſſes of this manufacture,—not equally favourable to the growth of wool itſelf,—and that it has only of late turned its attention in any degree to the cultivation of manufactures. It was firſt occupied in the manufacture of callicoes, which it carries on to a conſiderable extent at Paiſley and Glaſgow. Whether it will, from the example of Ireland, hereafter exert itſelf in the proſecution of this branch of manufactures, is another conſideration. I have only hinted at certain cauſes which may have obſtructed its efforts at improvement, but which may not apply equally to other countries.

Is not this, it is ſaid, a narrow, jealous, and ſelfiſh policy?—is not Ireland ſhortly to be conſidered as a part of one and the ſame kingdom, and placed for all political purpoſes in the ſame

ſituation

ſituation with ourſelves? I would in anſwer to this queſtion aſk, in return, are there, between one county and another in England, protecting duties to give a preference and advantage in ſale to the goods of one county over thoſe of another? —do there exiſt any inequalities in the agregate amount of individual taxation in theſe different counties of Great Britain?—no, each perſon bears his fair *aliquot* part of the common burthen of the entire taxation of his country.—But is that the caſe of Ireland? They bear as an *aliquot* part of the whole two-17ths, whilſt we are to pay the other, that is fifteen-17ths; and this proportion, your Lordſhips obſerve, is to laſt peremptorily for twenty years. And it is the neceſſary conſequence, as we conceive, to be drawn from the premiſes we have ſubmitted, that, ſuppoſing theſe manufactures ſhould be transferred beneficially to Ireland, as we firmly believe they will during that period of time; that England will be deprived of the means of affording its contribution, to the extent of its aſſeſſed proportion of fifteen-17ths of the whole burthen of taxes, when Ireland ſhall have acquired to itſelf all the moſt beneficial ſources of comparative ability by the transfer of this very manufacture? The proportion will then become glaringly unequal. From the moment that the manufacture is laid open to the

ſpeculations of Iriſh adventure, and to the proſecution of this branch of commerce, without reſtraint, the inequality in this article is begun. And with this inequality, under the eſtabliſhed *ratio* of national contribution, we are to be fixed for twenty years to come. In this manner, therefore, will the country at large be affected as to its finance in the propoſed ſcale of its contribution, whilſt the manufacturer, who has under the faith of the Legiſlature, pledged by repeated Acts of Parliament, and a long uniform ſyſtem of national policy, inveſted a large capital in this trade, and which is convertible, beneficially to no other purpoſe, will groan under the loſs and privation of his former ſources of ſubſiſtence, without the means of converting his former ſtock and materials of trade to any other purpoſe. For when you withdraw the trade itſelf, all the mills, works, and machinery belonging to them, inſtantly become nothing but ſo much uſeleſs wood and iron, and reſolve themſelves in effect into their original elementary parts. They are no longer valuable as machines. The whole property diſſolves the moment the manufacture is ſubſtracted from it. And what, my Lords, is the ſize and magnitude of that property upon which the propoſed meaſure is to have this operation? The property computed to be engaged in this trade is one third

third of the total value of the goods made in the courſe of a year, and aſſuming that to be 18,600,000l. the total of that capital may be fairly eſtimated at ſix millions ſterling. Six millions thus embarked upon the faith of theſe Acts of Parliament, and the continued policy of the Legiſlature for the laſt two or three hundred years, will become loſt to the preſent proprietors; and the perſons who are to take their place in the proſecution of this manufacture, will ſit light and eaſy under the comparative weight of their relative national burthens, and reſpective proportions of taxation, and without the expence we are at in purchaſing mills, ſituations for manufactures, water-courſes, and the like: all which are matters of high price, and ſometimes not to be obtained in this country at any price whatſoever.

Under theſe circumſtances, and conſidering the infinite diſadvantages under which the Britiſh manufacturer, to whom the wiſdom and policy of the nation has for ſo many years appropriated the ſole manufacture of Britiſh wool will labour, we truſt your Lordſhips will not make an alteration, which if made, and if, as we are aſſured it muſt be unfortunately, made, is alſo incapable of reviſal or correction. Whatever your Lordſhips ſhall adopt to-day, is adopted for ever: nothing will be left, in caſe the

the experiment is unſucceſsful, but unavailing ſorrow and regret for having made it. The petitioners therefore do apply to your Lordſhips in an eſpecial manner, as the guardians of the ſtability of the conſtitution and policy of the country, as that which your Lordſhips have often been in periods of dangerous innovotion, the *ſtatores hujus urbis atque imperii.*—To avert this threatened evil, your Lordſhips have often heretofore, in times of trouble and commotion, by your permanent ſituation in the legiſlature, and by the ſtability of your councils, afforded a timely check to many dangerous changes and innovations that may have been from time to time meditated, and which, but for your Lordſhips reſiſtance, would have been effectuated. We implore the protection of the ſame benignant and fatherly aſſiſtance againſt the ſame ſpecies of innovation meditated at this moment, and threatening to ſtrike ſo deeply as it muſt at the root of our moſt important national commerce, and involving in its deſtruction not the intereſt, as has been repreſented of a few intereſted manufacturers only, but the intereſt of almoſt every claſs and deſcription of ſociety, comprehending not only every artiſan and dealer connected collaterally with that manufacturer, but the farmer, the owner of land, in ſhort,

every

every perſon in any degree intereſted in the permanent benefits derived from the produce, commerce, and active induſtry of his country. We implore your Lordſhips to conſider the object of theſe ancient and long ſubſiſting acts of parliament, and to give effect to their policy. Your Lordſhips know theſe acts were not unadviſedly made; that it was not raſhly that your anceſtors reſolved upon this ſyſtem of excluſively protecting and encouraging the woollen manufacturers of your own country, and of exporting them to other countries, enhanced in price by the labour and taxes of this country, and bringing back in return to the coffers of this country, the amount of that labour and of thoſe taxes, to be again thrown into active circulation, and to become again the ſource of renewed commerce and of repeated taxation. They apply to your Lordſhips to redeem them from this threatened calamity, imploring your Lordſhips not only to abſtain yourſelves, but to avert others from courſes leading to that dangerous ſyſtem of change, which, if it does take place, will involve them, their families, the diſtricts, and communities of which they form a part, in ſhort, every deſcription of Britiſh manufacturer and artiſan, and the moſt important Britiſh intereſts, in one common ruin. Your Lordſhips anceſtors not only have in our

ſtatute

ſtatute books and records raiſed up memorials to remind you of their ancient and well approved policy; but your Lordſhips' Houſe, in order to remind you ſtill further of this, the cardinal policy of the realm (as with a view to other ſubjects) they in like manner remind you of the naval atchievements of your anceſtors, and point out by animated repreſentations and images, what is the true conſtitutional ſtrength and defenſive protection of your country, by arraying the walls of this Houſe with the triumphs of your anceſtors, with the heroic naval victories and exploits of thoſe who have gone before you in the paths of glory. I ſay, my Lords, with the ſame view, and ſubſervient to ſimilar purpoſes of policy, in addition to the memorials recorded in your ſtatutes, your Lordſhips anceſtors have exhibited a kind of ſenſible ſymbol and token of perpetual admonition to your Lordſhips Houſe, drawn and formed from this great ſtaple article of our national commerce; by making it the ſeat of judgment itſelf, upon which the learned ſages of the law, within this Houſe itſelf, in this laſt moſt ſolemn reſort of national juſtice, are arrayed and drawn together.

By all theſe ſacred memorials, by the ancient and hallowed ſtatutes of your realm, by

every

every thing which your anceſtors, who have gone before you in the charge of this high legiſlative truſt, have endeavoured to impreſs upon the minds of thoſe who ſhould follow them, as moſt ſacred and obligatory; we implore your Lordſhips to protect and reſcue us, from the effects of a meaſure which will involve irretrievably and without power of change this country itſelf, through the deſtruction of its moſt important manufacturing intereſts, in one entire and abſolute ruin!—It is not upon vain conjecture,—it is not from preſumptions and apprehenſions which fall upon and occupy light minds, incapable of forming ſound and rational judgments on ſubjects of this grave importance, that they appeal to your Lordſhips,—but it is upon ſuch grounds as they conceive ought to decide the judgment of all reaſonable perſons, that they deprecate the paſſing of this reſolution into a law, which when paſſed will be incapable under any ſenſe of actual and experienced inconvenience, or upon any proſpect of further and ſtill more urgent calamity, of change or modification, ſo long as the nation itſelf ſhall hold its name and place among the kingdoms of the world.

MINUTES

No. V.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

BEFORE THE HOUSE OF LORDS,

RELATING TO THE

WOOLLEN MANUFACTORY.

Ordered to be printed 1ſt May, 1800.

Die Jovis, 1 *Maii*, 1800.

THE Order of the Day being read for the Houſe to reſolve itſelf into a Committee of the whole Houſe, to take into further conſideration his Majeſty's moſt gracious meſſage, together with the addreſs of the two houſes of parliament of Ireland, and the reſolutions of the ſaid two houſes, touching a Union with Great Britain;

And for the Lords to be ſummoned; and for the ſeveral petitioners concerned in the Woollen Manufactory to be heard by their counſel againſt the Sixth reſolution:

The

The Houſe reſolved itſelf into a Committee of the whole Houſe accordingly,

Lord *Walſingham* in the Chair,

The Counſel were called in.

And Mr. *Law* and Mr. *Plumer* appearing as counſel for the petitioners, Mr. *Law* was heard on their behalf.

Then Mr. *William Huſtler* was called in; and having been ſworn, was examined as follows:

Where do you live, and what is your buſineſs?—I live at Bradford in Yorkſhire; my buſineſs is that of a Wool-Stapler.

How long have you been engaged in that buſineſs?—About ſixteen years.

Was your father engaged in the ſame buſineſs, and for how long?—My father was engaged in the ſame buſineſs about ſixty years.

Had you the advantage of acceſs to your father's papers, and the obſervations he had made upon this ſubject?—I had.

During the period of your own proſecution of the buſineſs, have you been accuſtomed to purchaſe wool in this kingdom?—I have.

Be

Be ſo good as ſtate in what counties you have bought wool?—I have bought wool——

(The witneſs appearing to ſpeak from a paper, was aſked),

What is the paper you have in your hand?—It is an account in my own hand writing of the counties in which I have bought wool; I have bought wool in the counties of Durham, Yorkſhire, Lincolnſhire, Leiceſterſhire, Rutland, Nottingham, Warwick, Northampton, Huntingdon, Cambridge, Stafford, Norfolk, Hertford, Middleſex, Surry, Berkſhire, Bedford, Buckingham, and Hampſhire; and by my partner and agents, in Worceſterſhire, Eſſex, Northumberland, Kent, Suſſex, Suffolk, Wiltſhire, Dorſetſhire, Oxfordſhire, Shropſhire, Herefordſhire, in South Wales, and Scotland, beſides one or two other counties which I cannot ſpeak ſo poſitively to.

Have the purchaſes made by you in theſe counties been every year, or only occaſionally at different periods during the ſixteen years you have ſpoken of?—Occaſionally; I have not bought in each county every year.

Are you well acquainted at this time with the quantity of wool produced in the country?—It is impoſſible for me to ſtate the exact quantity

quantity of wool grown in this kingdom; I know of no regiſter, nor any documents from which I can collect it with certainty; but I have ſeen calculations made by my father, who was long in buſineſs, and ſeveral others made by gentlemen in different parts of the kingdom, which ſtated that ſome years ago, in the years 1782, and I think in 1788 and 1791, the quantity was then eſtimated at ſix hundred thouſand packs; theſe accounts, I believe, have been received as being made with correctneſs; and from the knowledge I now have of the growth of wool in this kingdom, I have no reaſon to believe that the alteration is great; therefore I calculate the quantity now in the kingdom as being the ſame, or nearly the ſame as formerly.

Is that the reſult of your own perſonal obſervations and experience in the buſineſs during the whole time that you have been acquainted with it?—From comparing the quantities of wool grown upon many farms in different parts of the kingdom, with the quantities now grown on the ſame farms, I make my calculation, that the quantity is not much altered.

Is it your opinion that the quantity has increaſed or decreaſed of late?—I ſaid before, that I conceive the quantity was not materially

altered. I know many inſtances of its being decreaſed by inclofures, and by the introduction of a new breed of ſheep; in Warwickſhire, in Lincolnſhire, in Leiceſterſhire, and other parts of the kingdom.

Explain in what way incloſures have the effect of leſſening the growth of wool?—Land in a waſte ſtate is generally paſtured by ſheep, and nearly, I think, by ſheep alone; when encloſed, the greateſt part is generally ploughed up, in which ſtate it no longer furniſhes paſture for ſheep.

Have you obſerved what the effect is of encreaſing the fertility of the ſoil upon wool?—I think it invariably renders the wool heavier and of leſs value.

When you ſpeak of the number of packs, what number of pounds of wool do you compute in a pack?—Two hundred and forty pounds in a pack.

Do you know, of your own knowledge, what is the average price of a pack of wool at this time?—I eſtimate the average value now to be eleven pounds ten ſhillings.

What was the average price of a pack of wool in 1779, and from that time downwards?—It appears, from my father's books, that the price in 1779 was about five pounds per pack.

Did

Did you make thoſe extracts yourſelf from your father's books?—Yes. From that time to 1791, I have not made any extract. In 1791, the average price, as near as I could eſtimate it, was nine pounds: in 1792 eleven pounds: in 1793, from ſeven pounds to eight pounds: in 1794, from eight pounds to eight pounds ten ſhillings: in 1795, nine pounds: in 1796, from nine pounds to nine pounds ten ſhillings: in 1797, nine pounds: in 1798 from nine pounds to nine pounds ten ſhillings: in 1799 eleven pounds, and at preſent eleven pounds ten ſhillings, as I before ſtated.

From the knowledge you have yourſelf of this commodity, ſtate to the houſe, whether there is a ſufficient ſupply for the demand?—I believe the ſupply is inſufficient.

Have you, in the courſe of your own experience, found that to be the caſe?—I have, in many inſtances found that that is now the caſe.

In what reſpect?—By applications made in parts of the country where we have been accuſtomed to buy wool at this time of the year. I ſpeak of the coarſer wools and the long wools: the ſupply of fine wool has been brought from Spain and other foreign parts.

You ſpeak of applications made; were they by yourſelf, to be ſupplied with this ſpecies of wool?—They were.

What was the reſult of thoſe applications? Did you get what quantity you wanted?—I was told there was none left in the parts where I made the application; not in every inſtance, but generally.

At what time did you experience that inſufficiency? How long back?—Since the month of February laſt.

Whether in former times in the year 1782, and ſubſequent to that time, there uſed generally to be a quantity of wool on hand unſold? —I cannot ſpeak to the quantity on hand in 1782, not being then in buſineſs. Since that time, I know, from having travelled in the buſineſs myſelf, that the quantity was very conſiderable.

How long ſince, and for how long did it continue to be an ample ſupply?—I think in the years 1783 and 1784, the quantity on hand of the long and coarſer wools was eſtimated, as being at leaſt three years growth. I am perſuaded from my own experience, that that was not over-rated.

How has it been ſince that time?—The old ſtocks have gradually leſſened until the ſpring of laſt year.

Leſſened by being worked up?—Yes; I mean ſo.

Was it then in the ſpring of the laſt year that

that you firſt began to experience a difficulty in obtaining as much as you wanted?—I do not recollect ever meeting with any difficulty in buying the quantity of wool I wanted before the laſt and preſent years, excepting in the latter end of the year 1792, when the wool of the country was bought up on ſpeculation by wool-ſtaplers and country bankers.

Has all the quantity that was bought up in 1792, according to your own obſervation and experience, been worked up ſince that time?—I believe it is entirely wrought up; to the beſt of my knowledge it is.

In addition to the growth of each ſucceeding year, beſides the ſtock that was then collected?—I mean ſo.

How long in your judgment is it that the ſtock now in hand will be ſufficient to ſupply the conſumption of the country, ſuppoſing the demand to continue to be the ſame as it has been for ſome time paſt?—I am afraid there is ſcarcely ſufficient of many kinds of wool to ſupply the demand till next July, the uſual time of ſheep-ſhearing.

At this period of the year in former times, what quantity uſed there to be, and for how long a time was the quantity in hand equal to the ſupply required?—In former years, when I firſt began buſineſs, the quantity was ſo large,

as I ſtated before, as to be ſufficient to ſupply the whole trade of the country for one or two years, according to the beſt of my recollection and knowledge.

Subſequent to that time, in general at this period of the year, about the ſpring of the year, what quantity uſed there to be on hand ſufficient to carry on the trade, and for how long a time?—The ſtocks, as I have ſaid before, have gradually decreaſed; but in the years 1796 and 1795, I think there was at leaſt ſufficient in the ſpring to ſupply the manufactories ſix months after the uſual time of ſheep-ſhearing.

Do you mean to ſtate then that there is not at this time ſo much by ſix months conſumption as there uſed to be upon hand?—That is my meaning.

Are you acquainted with any method by which the growth of wool in this country can be increaſed?—I know of none, but what would tend to leſſen the means of ſupplying the people with corn; ſuch as converting the arable land into ſheep paſture, or ſubſtituting ſheep for horned cattle or horſes.

Suppoſing the larger breed of ſheep to be encouraged for the ſake of the carcaſe, and for the greater quantity of meat being produced, what effect would that have with reſpect to the produce of wool?—If an equal number of larger

ſheep

ſheep could be kept in the ſame paſture, the quantity of wool would be increaſed. I cannot ſay from my own knowledge, whether the farmer can keep an equal number upon the ſame paſture of the large ſheep as of the ſmaller.

In that event of a greater quantity produced by a larger animal, of what quality would the produce be; would it be better or worſe than that produced by one of a ſmaller ſize?—Generally worſe: there are ſome ſmall ſheep, ſuch as are bred in Scotland and Cumberland, which produce coarſe wool.

The increaſe then in the quality of wool, by encouraging a larger breed of ſheep, would be to deteriorate the quality?—Certainly.

Would it leſſen the quantity of ſhort wool that is uſed for the purpoſe of clothing?—The larger ſheep generally produce long combing wool.

Which is not ſo much uſed for clothing?—It is unfit, or not ſo fit for the purpoſes of making cloth as the other.

Do you know, or have you obſerved, whether if the paſture upon which the ſheep feed becomes better, the wool becomes worſe?—I ſaid before, I thought that was invariably the caſe.

You have ſtated a general calculation reſpect-

ing the number of packs produced in a year, and likewiſe the average price per pack, can you give the houſe any judgment how much the wool is improved by manufacture upon a general average?—My eſtimate makes it, that it is increaſed by the manufacture three times its original value.

What are the data upon which you calculate that it is trebled in its value by the manufacture?—In the manufacture of ſome kinds of heavy woollens, I believe it is only double; in other ſpecies of woollen manufacture, it is increaſed ſeven, eight, and I believe even nine times its original value; and I have reaſon to believe, that three times is not under the truth upon the average.

Upon that low eſtimate of the average value, what is the total ſum produced by the manufacture of wool in the kingdom?—Suppoſing the quantity as I ſtated before to be ſix hundred thouſand packs, valued at eleven pounds per pack, and that is trebled by the manufacturer, it will amount I think to nineteen millions eight hundred thouſand pounds annually.

That you ſtate to be the total value of the manufacture of what is grown in this country only, without any foreign import?—Certainly.

Beſides that, is there a conſiderable quantity of foreign wool imported into this country for the

the purpoſe of manufacture?—I am not an importer of wool; but I know from ſeeing Spaniſh, Portugal, and other foreign wool, that the quantity brought into our markets is conſiderable.

Has not the quantity of Spaniſh and Portugueze wool, introduced for the purpoſe of manufacture into this country, conſiderably increaſed of late years?—Not being an importer, I am not ſo able to anſwer that queſtion as ſome others.

From your knowledge and obſervation reſpecting the trade, and all the information you have been able to collect, ſtate, according to the beſt judgment and calculation you can make, the number of perſons who are employed in this manufacture?—My father's calculation of the number of people employed in this manufacture and dependant upon it, in the year 1782, was three millions. The introduction of machinery has certainly leſſened that number in ſome degree; but I am not able to ſtate the decreaſe.

From the knowledge you have of the trade itſelf, can you ſtate what is the relative price of wool in Ireland, compared with wool of the ſame quality in this country, beginning with the year 1795?—I have had an account put into my hand by a gentleman in the Iriſh trade, of the prices in Ireland compared with thoſe at Norwich.

What

What did that ſtate the value of combing wool in Ireland to be in 1795?—The price in Ireland was ſtated to me to be eleven-pence in 1795, and eight-pence farthing at Norwich; wool of the like quality, in 1796, fourteen-pence farthing in Ireland, Ten-pence at Norwich: in 1797, nine-pence three farthings in Ireland, eight-pence three farthings at Norwich: in 1798, twelve-pence three farthings in Ireland, ſeven-pence farthing at Norwich: in 1799, fifteen-pence farthing in Ireland, eight-pence halfpenny at Norwich.

Do you, in all theſe inſtances of compariſon, take wool of the ſame quality and of the ſame ſort?—I do.

(*By a Lord.*) From whom had you that paper?—Mr. John Gurney at Norwich, engaged in the trade.

(*By Counſel.*) Does your own experience and knowledge of the trade confirm the truth of that ſtatement?—I never was in Ireland, and therefore cannot ſpeak reſpecting the prices of wool there, only from information. I have no doubt whatever of the veracity of the perſon who gave it me, and I can confirm the account of the prices of Engliſh wool from my own knowledge.

In general can you ſtate from your own knowledge, as a perſon converſant with the trade, and

and who has bought and ſold a great quantity of wool, that the prices in Ireland of wool of the ſame quality has been higher than thoſe of the ſame quality in England?—Only from the general report of people in the Iriſh trade.

From the knowledge that you have acquired as a perſon acquainted with the buſineſs?—I cannot ſpeak from my own knowledge reſpecting the prices in Ireland at all.

Can you ſpeak from your own knowledge of the comparative view of the freights in conveying wool to Ireland and to Yorkſhire from the weſtern coaſts of this kingdom?—Wool has not been allowed to be exported to Ireland.

What would be the freight of conveying it if it were allowed?—Judging from the diſtance of the weſtern coaſt, and comparing that with the diſtance from London to Hull, and from other parts to Hull, I think from three to four ſhillings a pack would be an ample freight from the weſtern coaſt to the neareſt ports of Ireland.

What, in point of fact, is the freight paid upon a pack of wool from Exeter to Leeds, if conveyed by land carriage by the way of London?—From Exeter to Leeds by London, if ſent by land from London to Leeds, the carriage would amount to about twenty-nine ſhillings;

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I eſtimate it at twenty-nine ſhillings and three-pence.

Suppoſing it ſent by ſea from London?—Twenty-one ſhillings and three-pence.

Is it uſual, in point of fact, to ſend wool from theſe ports to Leeds, ſometimes by land carriage and ſometimes by water conveyance?—Wool is frequently ſent from thoſe ports to Leeds, generally I believe the finer ſorts by land, the lower and leſs valuable ſorts by water from London.

What is the difference then in the price, between being ſent to Ireland and being ſent into Yorkſhire, of wool to be ſent from the ſame place?—Suppoſing the freight to Ireland to be, as I ſaid before, four ſhillings, the difference would amount to twenty-five ſhillings and three-pence, if ſent by land from London to Leeds, in favour of Ireland; and ſeventeen ſhillings and three-pence dearer to ſend it by water to Leeds than to Ireland.

Suppoſing the wool ſent from Wiltſhire, Dorſetſhire, Suſſex, and Hampſhire; ſtate the comparative price of conveyance to Ireland, compared with that of Yorkſhire?—From the counties of Wilts, Dorſet, Suſſex, and Hampſhire, I eſtimate the average carriage to be about ten ſhillings per pack to London; from thence

thence to Leeds, by land, fifteen ſhillings and nine-pence, amounting together to twenty-five ſhillings and nine-pence; from the coaſts of Dorſetſhire, Suſſex, and Hampſhire, to Ireland, I eſtimate that five ſhillings would be a ſufficient freight, leaving twenty ſhillings and nine-pence in favour of Ireland, if ſent by land to Leeds; twelve ſhillings and nine-pence if ſent by water to Leeds.

In point of fact, is Yorkſhire partly ſupplied from the different counties you have enumerated, Wiltſhire, Dorſetſhire, Suſſex, and Hampſhire?—We have large quantities every year from all thoſe counties.

Are you ſupplied from thoſe counties with the finer wool by land often, and the other wool by water?—We have the finer wool generally by land, and the heavier by water.

And you have it at the rate you have ſtated?—Yes.

Whether Ireland can be ſupplied with wool from this country at a cheaper rate than many of the manufactures of this country obtain it, ſuppoſing the prohibition to export it to be taken off?—I have no doubt of that.

From what parts of the kingdom could it be ſupplied cheaper than the manufactures in this country

country obtain it?—From the ſouth and weſtern coaſts of Great Britain.

The difference would be in the article of convenience in the freight?—Certainly.

Is there any other article that the Iriſh manufacturer, ſuppoſing a woollen manufacture eſtabliſhed in that country, could be ſupplied with cheaper than the woollen manufactures of this country? What, for inſtance, is the freight of coals!—I am myſelf engaged in the coal trade at Liverpool, and ſend coals to Ireland conſtantly. We have had them carried from Liverpool to Dublin and Newry at from five to ſix ſhillings per ton for the freight; we have paid more ſometimes than that, but we have frequently ſent them for thoſe freights.

At the ſame time, what was the freight of coals ſent from the ſame place to ports in this kingdom where the manufacture of wool was carried on, for the purpoſe of the manufacture?—We alſo ſend coals from Liverpool to the coaſt of Devonſhire; the freights are, I believe, from twelve to fifteen ſhillings per ton at leaſt.

Is there a manufacture of woollens in Devonſhire where coals are ſent to?—There is a conſiderable manufacture of woollens in ſome parts of Devonſhire; but I cannot ſay poſitively whether

ther the coals we ſend are conſumed in that part of Devonſhire, though we ſend, I think, to all parts of the coaſt.

Have you any doubt, ſuppoſing the free export of wool to Ireland were allowed, what effect it would produce upon the manufacture of this country?—I conceive that a large quantity of wool would immediately be bought in the markets of this country for the uſe of the Iriſh manufacturers; the conſequence of which muſt be, that Britiſh manufacturers would be deprived of employment.

Have you any reaſon to believe, that the demand for wool in this country will in future years be leſs than it has been experienced to be of late?—I have no reaſon to believe that the demand for wool will decreaſe.

In the event of peace do you know of any markets that might be opened for the conveyance of thoſe articles of woollen manufacture?—Merchants concerned in the foreign trade would anſwer that queſtion better than I can.

Examined by the Lords.

Have you any particular reaſon for chooſing the year upon which you ſtated the price of wool?—I believe the average price of wool at that time was lower than at any other.

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Do you mean to ſay, that you believe before that it had been higher?—I believe it had.

Can you ſtate that price?—No, I cannot; it was before I was in buſineſs; and I have not my father's papers in my pocket to refer to.

You ſeem to be acquainted with a great many counties. Is it to be underſtood in your opinion whether the effect of incloſing, taking the whole counties that you know together, is to decreaſe or increaſe arable land?—The incloſure of waſte land has certainly, as far as I can judge, increaſed the quantity of arable land.

Taking all the counties together that you know?—I mean ſo.

Whether you think thoſe ſheep that are fed upon good and improved paſture land do not produce as good wool as thoſe fed on commons, where the paſture is very ſcanty, and where they are obliged to ſcramble over buſhes? Whether you do not think the land ſo improved produces as good a quality of ſheep, and as good wool, as thoſe commons before they were ſo encloſed and improved?—I think the quality is not ſo good; the quantity upon the ſame number of ſheep I think will be increaſed.

Do you not think that improved land will produce a greater number of ſheep, and conſequently

ſequently more wool?—If the whole of it be occupied for ſheep paſture, the quantity will be increaſed undoubtedly.

With reſpect to the three particular counties, Warwick, Northampton, and Leiceſter, do you think in thoſe counties the arable is increaſed or decreaſed by incloſure?—I ſpeak of incloſure of waſte land; the quantity of paſture land has certainly been increaſed in thoſe counties by the incloſure of the open corn fields.

Mention any three or more counties in which you ſuppoſe there is as much land converted to arable as in thoſe three counties has been converted to paſture?—I am not able to anſwer that queſtion; I am not a ſufficient judge of the quantities of land incloſed in thoſe counties, or in other counties.

The witneſs was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. CHRISTOPHER RAWDON was called in; and having been ſworn, was examined as follows:

Where do you live, and are you engaged in any branch of the woollen manufacture?—I am engaged in the woollen manufacture near Halifax.

From what market for wool are you in the habit of ſupplying yourſelf?—From Wakefield market, and from the growers in Lancaſhire; from Halifax market, and Keighley market.

Have you lately found any difficulty in ſupplying yourſelf with wool at thoſe markets?—More than uſually ſo for the laſt half year, or ſince November.

Have you lately made any application for wool without effect?—I have ſought wool in the markets of Wakefield and Halifax proper for my manufacture, and have not found it, though Wakefield is the principal wool mart for the county of York.

In what proportion have you found the ſupply leſs than formerly?—Since Chriſtmas I have found not more than half the uſual quantity of wool in the market.

Have you found any inconvenience in the interruption of your works from that circumſtance?—At one period part of my works ſtood for want of wool to employ them.

At what markets did you apply in order to be ſupplied, and without effect?—At Wakefield, Halifax, and Keighley.

Do you know whether any other manufacture in your neighbourhood has ſuffered the like inconvenience?—A conſiderable manufacture

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in my neighbourhood ſtopped for ſeveral days for want of wool to employ the workmen.

Did the workmen remain out of employ for any conſiderable time in conſequence of that want of wool?—About a week.

Did you make thoſe workmen who ſo lay out of work any allowance on that account?—I gave them ſomething, their being out of work not being their fault.

Did you, in order to obtain a ſupply of wool, offer any higher price for it?—I could not meet with the wool, therefore the price was out of the queſtion.

What exertions, journeys, or inquiries did you make for the purpoſe of procuring wool?—I applied perſonally in the Wakefield, Halifax, and Keighley markets; and in Lincolnſhire my agent wrote that he could ſcarcely find a parcel of wool to ſell in a ride of forty miles.

Are you capable of forming any judgment of what will be the effect of any exportation of wool on the manufactures carried on in that part of Yorkſhire where you live?—As I am firmly of opinion that there is not more than wool ſufficient to employ the hands now at work till new wool comes, any diminution from that ſtock muſt juſt ſo far deprive our labourers of their work, and I know no other remedy than the pariſh for them.

Are you capable of forming any judgment as to the amount of the capital veſted in the trade for carrying on the manufacturing buſineſs of the country?—Of that capital which is immoveable, or nearly ſo, I can form a tolerably correct idea; there being documents printed of the amount of the export of woollens, and that amount being between eight and nine millions; the general opinion alſo admitting, that the home trade is greater than the export, would make our exports amount to upwards of nineteen millions. I know from my own works, that I am not able to finiſh three times the coſt of thoſe works in woollens in the courſe of the year; therefore the utenſils and machinery, and veſted capital with other works upon the ſame plan, would amount to upwards of ſix millions; but as all works may not be on the ſame expenſive ſcale, I take off from that ſum one million, leaving I think to a certainty five millions of veſted capital, the greateſt part of which cannot be removed at all, and the reſt not without great loſs.

In forming that calculation of the veſted capital, do you take at all into conſideration the quantity of foreign wool that is uſed in the manufacture?—Not in this eſtimate; becauſe there are articles of woollen manufacture I conceive exported, that are not in the account of

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the exports, ſuch as hoſiery, that would amount to a ſum probably equal to the export of fine cloths made of Spaniſh wool.

Are you to be underſtood, that in addition to the export to the amount of eight millions and a half of fine woollen cloths, there is alſo an export of worſteds to nearly the ſame amount?—I apprehend the worſteds are included in the aggregate ſum of eight millions five hundred thouſand pounds exported.

Whether this capital which conſiſts of mills and machinery is capable of being tranſported to any other country, or whether upon the removal of the manufacture, the owners will not incur a total loſs in theſe particulars?—The greateſt part are immoveable, conſiſting of mills, buildings, and that kind of machinery not tranſportable without very great loſs; I mean to ſay, the principal part cannot be moved, and what can be removed, would be with a very great loſs indeed.

Would that which remained, and was not capable of being removed, be totally loſt in point of value to the owner, or would it be capable of being applied to other purpoſes?—I conceive it would not be capable to be applied to other purpoſes; the diſtrict I occupy as a manufacturer had no buildings, and if there was no manufactory of this kind, would return

to its original ſtate; as the ſoil would not ſupport the inhabitants.

According to the beſt obſervation you have been able to form upon that ſubject, has there or not been any conſiderable decreaſe in the wool within theſe two or three years paſt?—If I am to anſwer that queſtion as to the quantity on hand, I can certainly ſay that it has diminiſhed.

Do you know whether there remains any great quantity in the hands of the wool-ſtaplers or growers?—I cannot find it, and I have ſought it diligently.

Do you believe the demand of the commerce of the country in this article to be ſuch, that if more could be furniſhed, more would be capable of being worked up?—I have no doubt but more would be ſold if there was wool to make it; I have returned orders becauſe I could not meet with wool.

What do you then apprehend would be the conſequence of permitting the exportation to Ireland, or elſewhere, of a quantity of the wool now uſually employed in the Britiſh manufactures?—Of courſe, thoſe who now work it muſt either find a freſh trade, or they muſt be impoveriſhed.

Do you know of any other ſource, from which the deficiency occaſioned in the wool for home

home uſe, could be ſupplied?—Not for home uſe.

Are you capable of forming a judgment what is the total growth of wool in a year?—Merely from general report.

Do you know the relative quantity between that which is manufactured for home uſe, and for foreign export?—I ſhould conceive in the proportion of four of export to five of home trade.

Are you acquainted with the expence of freights between Yorkſhire and different parts of the country, from which wool is brought into Yorkſhire for the purpoſe of manufacturing?—I am.

What is the rate of freight, for inſtance, from Devonſhire to Yorkſhire, or to London, adding the carriage from London to Yorkſhire?—Not uſing that kind of wool, I do not ſpeak to a certainty; from Lincolnſhire and the heavy wool countries I obtain my ſupply.

What are the freights from one part of Great Britain to another which you can compare with the freight to Ireland?—I do not know.

Are you acquainted with the rates of freight from any part of Ireland to any foreign European dominions?—Being in the conſtant habit of exporting wool of my manufacture, or nearly

ſo, to Spain and Portugal, I am enabled to ſay, that in ſome the price of freights from Hull or from Liverpool, make a difference of twenty-five per cent. in favour of Liverpool; and as Ireland is ſtill more favourably ſituated for exporting to Spain and Portugal, I have no doubt but the difference would be greater than between Hull and Liverpool.

The witneſs was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. THOMAS LUMB was called in; and having been ſworn, was examined as follows:

What buſineſs are you engaged in, and at what place?—At Wakefield in the county of York, a wool-ſtapler.

For how long?—Twenty-eight years.

During that period of time, in what counties have you been accuſtomed to purchaſe wool?—Leiceſterſhire, Northamptonſhire, Berkſhire, Oxfordſhire, Buckinghamſhire, Wiltſhire, Hampſhire, Suſſex, Hertfordſhire, Bedfordſhire, Cambridgeſhire, Norfolk, and Suffolk.

Have you been accuſtomed to make journies annually into thoſe counties for the purpoſe of purchaſing wool?—Four times in the year into nine, and once into four.

During how long time has that been the caſe?—The whole of the time.

Have

Have you perceived of late any difference in the ſupply of wool from thoſe counties, whether it is increaſed or decreaſed?—A conſiderable decreaſe.

Do you confine that obſervation to any particular counties, or that you have generally found a conſiderable decreaſe?—In general; but not in all counties alike.

From what period can you ſtate that you have experienced yourſelf that decreaſe?—In the laſt ten years.

During that period has the decreaſe been gradual?—Gradual.

Have you obſerved, whether of late, there is any conſiderable ſtock on hand not worked up?—Very little.

At this period of the year, what ſtock uſed there to be on hand when the ſupply was ſufficient, reckoning the number of months that it would laſt?—I have formerly found as much wool upon hand of the growth of the year before in the month of October, as I now generally find of the laſt year's growth in the month of April.

Has that generally been the caſe in all the counties you have mentioned?—In general.

In what ſpecies of wool has this decreaſe been experienced by you?—Chiefly in the finer ſorts.

Has

Has there been alſo a decreaſe in the combing wool, the coarſer ſort?—I cannot ſpeak to that, not being in that trade.

Is the ſort of wool you have been in the habit of purchaſing, the finer wool for cloth?—Yes; the ſhort fine clothing wool.

Can you ſtate any cauſe to which you have yourſelf obſerved this diminution is attributable?—To the increaſed demand of wool in Yorkſhire, ſince the introduction of machinery principally, and alſo, in ſome degree, from the many incloſures that have taken place.

Where recent incloſures have taken place, have you, in fact, obſerved that fewer ſheep were produced than were formerly?—I have.

Has that been the caſe in any conſiderable degree that the quantity has been leſs?—I think ſo.

In thoſe places where there have been incloſures was the quality better or worſe?—The quality is inferior.

Were you able to procure the ſame quantity of fine wool which you dealt in from thoſe counties which you uſed to do where there have been incloſures?—No.

Did you obſerve what was the effect of the difference in the feed of the animal, when a different mode of agriculture was introduced as food, ſuch as turnips and artificial graſſes?

Have

Have you obſerved what effect that produced upon the wool?—It tends to enlarge the growth of the wool, the length of it, and to lower the quality; it makes it longer and coarſer, and not ſo uſeful in our manufactures.

You have ſtated, that there is at preſent an inſufficiency to anſwer the purpoſe of the manufacture; whether according to your knowledge and judgment, which you have collected for twenty-eight years, there is any proſpect of the demand being diminiſhed?—I ſhould apprehend not; but in caſe of a peace, a conſiderably greater demand.

If at this time a greater quantity of wool could be obtained, could the trade work it up into manufactures?—I think they might.

Are you acquainted with any method, by which the growth of wool in this country might be improved and extended as to its quantity and quality?—I know of no probable method at preſent.

Whether if the wool of this country is permitted to be exported to Ireland, there would or not be a ſufficiency for the manufactory?—Having already ſcarce ſufficient for our own manufactories, we certainly ſhould feel a greater inconvenience if any part of that were taken away; for had we not laſt year had a very

very large importation of Spaniſh wool, we ſhould not have had fine wool ſufficient to execute the orders then on hand.

You have ſpoken of having a conſiderable importation of foreign wool; what ſpecies of wool was that, and from what country?—From Spain.

Have you been accuſtomed to uſe that ſpecies of wool in your buſineſs for ſome years back?—I do not manufacture any wool myſelf, but merely purchaſe it to ſell to others that do.

Do you uſe any of the Portugueſe wool?—No.

Examined by the Lords.

Whether you know the price of coals at Liverpool?—I do not know.

What is the price in the manufacturing parts of Yorkſhire per ton?—Coals at Wakefield are not ſold by the ton but by meaſure; a cart load which three horſes will draw, is ſold for eight ſhillings; I ſhould reckon it the ſame as a chaldron.

Can you form any eſtimate of what proportion of wool grown in Yorkſhire is worked up in Yorkſhire?—No, I cannot; there is a large quantity of wool grown in Yorkſhire, but not of that kind which I generally purchaſe; I never did purchaſe any in Yorkſhire.

Is the large quantity that is grown in Yorkſhire conſumed there?—I do not know.

Of

Of which of the counties of England is the fine wool uſed in the manufactories in Yorkſhire?—Suſſex, Hampſhire, Norfolk, and Suffolk.

By what mode of conveyance does it come?—From Suſſex and Hampſhire by land to London, afterwards by water or by land at the option of the purchaſer.

Do you attribute the increaſed price of wool at preſent which you have ſtated to the increaſe of manufactures?—To the increaſe of manufactures and the ſhortneſs of the ſtocks upon hand.

The witneſs was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. JOHN RATCLIFFE was called in; and having been ſworn, was examined as follows:

In what part of the county of York have you carried on your manufacture, and for what time?—In the pariſh of Saddleworth, in the Weſt Riding of the county of York.

For what number of years?—More than fifteen years.

In what counties have you uſually purchaſed your wool?—I have formerly purchaſed wool in various counties; but lately manufacturing a particular ſort of wool only, it has ſuited my purpoſe better to buy from the ſtaplers.

Of

Of the produce of what counties is that wool which you have uſed?—Kent and Hereford, Shropſhire, Glouceſterſhire, Brecknockſhire, and from the ſtaplers in Yorkſhire, who buy it from various counties.

Has it fallen in your way to make any obſervations lately concerning the number of ſheep in Somerſetſhire?—I ſome years back uſed to travel through the county of Somerſet, over Mendip Hills, which were then waſte land and unincloſed, and there was a very conſiderable number of ſheep upon them; I obſerved the laſt time I was there theſe commons were incloſed, and there were but a very ſmall number of ſheep in the incloſures.

Was there a quantity much fewer in compariſon than you had obſerved formerly?—Much fewer.

Have you made any obſervations reſpecting the comparative increaſe or decreaſe of the Wool grown in Yorkſhire of late years?—I can only ſpeak as to the pariſh where I live; the pariſh where I live has much leſs than formerly.

Can you ſtate the proportion in which it is leſs than formerly?—I cannot exactly.

Is there a greater quantity of arable land in Yorkſhire and Somerſetſhire now than there was

was formerly?—There is in thoſe particular places where I have obſerved.

Is the quality of the wool of the ſheep in thoſe particular places improved of late years or not?—I have invariably obſerved, that the quality of wool has degenerated when the ſheep have been taken into paſture lands from the commons.

Are you capable of ſuggeſting any means by which the total quantity of wool grown in the country might be increaſed?—I cannot point out any means that occur to me ſo likely as turning the arable into paſture land; but that I apprehend is not likely to be done in the preſent ſituation of the country.

Have you experienced of late any greater difficulty in getting a ſupply of wool than formerly?—I have not; becauſe, as I ſaid before, I am in the habit of purchaſing from the ſtaplers, and I have always found the quantity that I wanted.

Have you formed any eſtimate of the value of mills, buildings, and other conſtituent articles of the veſted property of the woollen manufactories of this kingdom?—I have made ſome obſervations on a diſtrict with which I am very well acquainted: I have eſtimated the value of mills, warehouſes, and other buildings neceſſary for carrying on the works in that diſtrict, and

I found

I found the result of my estimation is that they are worth ninety-four thousand pounds. I have also estimated the value of the cloths manufactured in that district with those conveniencies, and the result of that estimation is, that they are worth two hundred and eighty-eight thousand pounds annually: therefore I conclude that the vested property of carrying on the woollen manufactories is to the annual produce as ninety-four to two hundred and eighty-eight, which is nearly one-third.

Are coals dearer or cheaper in the district immediately about Saddleworth, than in other manufacturing parts of Yorkshire?—They are dearer than they are at Leeds, Huddersfield, and Bradford; indeed I believe I may say generally, that they are dearer than in any other manufacturing town that I am acquainted with in the West Riding of the county of York.

What is the price of coals in your district near Saddleworth?—Upon the average, I take it at about fourteen or fifteen shillings per ton, the parish is rather extensive; in some places they may be higher, in some lower.

Is there any particular advantage belonging to this district for carrying on the woollen manufactories under this disadvantage in respect of coals?—It is a very hilly country which constitutes a great fall to the rivers, and that gives

us

us power to work our mills; and the waters are particularly fine and good for the manufactory of woollens.

Is the ſteam engine much in uſe in your part of the country?—I know of but one inſtance of a ſteam engine, and that is a ſmall one.

Is the ſteam engine at all neceſſary to be uſed where there is a ſufficient ſupply of water to carry on the buſineſs of the machinery without it?—By no means, where there is a ſufficient fall of water to give power to the mills.

Is that the caſe pretty generally at Saddleworth?—It is.

Are there any particular proceſſes in the woollen manufacture to which coals are neceſſarily uſeful, except for the purpoſes already mentioned, for which water is equally applicable?—Some kind of coals or fuel is neceſſary for the dying of wool and cloth, and for drying and preſſing.

Is the conſumption occaſioned in any of thoſe branches of the manufacture at all equal to the conſumption occaſioned by the uſe of fire engines?—No.

Is the quantity of coals conſumed in any of thoſe operations of the manufacture at all equal in point of quantity with the quantity conſumed by fire engines?—It bears a very ſmall proportion indeed.

Examined by the Lords.

From whence do you bring your coals in general?—From the pariſh of Oldham in Lancaſhire.

What is the diſtance from Saddleworth to the pit?—The pit from whence I am ſupplied is about a mile or a mile and a half from my houſe.

Are there many pits within that neighbourhood?—There are various pits in the neighbourhood.

Do you know of no other advantage ariſing to the manufacture from coals, but ſo far as they are uſed in ſteam engines, and in different proceſſes of the manufacture?---I do not recollect any other advantage ariſing from coals in the woollen manufactory but what I have already ſtated.

What do you think of the advantage of fuel in the manufacturer's houſes?---It certainly is a very great convenience; but it is that which no more accommodates the manufacturer than other labouring people in other parts of the community.

Do you know of any part of the country in which the woollen manufacture is eſtabliſhed in a conſiderable degree where fuel is not cheap in the inhabitants houſes?---I cannot anſwer that

that queſtion, becauſe I am not ſo well acquainted with manufacturers, where coals are dearer than in Saddleworth.

Do you know of any conſiderable extent of manufacturing country on the left ſide of the Aire?---I am not well acquainted with the manufactory on the left ſide of the Aire, if I underſtand what river is meant by the Aire; if I had the names of the country mentioned to me, I might perhaps underſtand it better.

Are you acquainted with the neighbourhood of Leeds?---Leeds I know.

Taking it on the left ſide of the Aire in an extent round Leeds?---At Leeds coals are a good deal cheaper than with us.

Do you know what the price of coals at Leeds is?---I believe between ſix and ſeven ſhillings per ton; but I cannot ſpeak poſitively to it; but I learned that from the converſations I have had with different perſons upon the ſubject.

Do you recollect the ſituation of Keighley?---I do not know Keighley; I never was at Keighley in my life.

Are you acquainted with the ſituation of Caſtlebridge?---I am not.

Do you recollect how far the manufactory extends from Leeds in a line upon the York road?---I do not. Leeds lies at the diſtance of

thirty miles or better from us; and it is a place we very ſeldom go to.

Were you underſtood right, that the great conſumption of coals in Saddleworth was in the fire engines?—I did not ſay ſo. I ſaid a great conſumption we had no occaſion for; for of fire engines at Saddleworth there was but one inſtance; and the conſumption of coal requiſite in the various branches of the manufacture, where there is water ſufficient to work the mills, is but of trifling value in compariſon to that conſumption which a ſteam engine requires.

In the working, then, of any engines that may be neceſſary, or that may be uſed in the manufactory, is it preferable to work them by water to working them by coal?—Certainly.

Do you ever uſe coals at fifteen ſhillings per ton for a ſteam engine?—I have no ſteam engine, nor do I uſe coals for that purpoſe; but the ſame coals, and of the price which I mention, are uſed for the little ſteam engine which I have alluded to before.

Has it fallen in your way to obſerve the ſteam engine? The queſtion meant to be aſked is, whether it is not the ſmall coal that is uſed in the ſteam engine which ſells at an inferior price, and which is not fit for family uſe?—An inferior coal will certainly do for the ſteam engine

engine to that which is requiſite for ſome other purpoſes.

Is it not that coal that is neceſſarily dug up in order to come to the better coal, that is always applied to a ſteam engine?—I believe, for the ſteam engines, they uſe the ſmall coal; but that coal, even with us, bears what I call a high price; that coal is not more than four or five ſhillings per ton leſs than the beſt.

Would that coal be ſaleable at all, if it was not applied to an engine?—If there was no other to be had, it certainly would.

Whether, in the ſummer time, there is not a difficulty to get that ſort of coal?—I think there is more generally a difficulty in getting that coal in winter than in ſummer.

The witneſs was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. WILLIAM FISHER was called in; and having been ſworn, was examined as follows:

Of what buſineſs are you; and where do you live?—I am a merchant at Leeds.

In what article do you deal as a merchant?—In cloth and coatings.

How long have you dealt in that article?—About twenty-eight years.

Has the price of wool riſen or fallen of late?—In 1798, I went into Northumberland and purchaſed from five to ſix hundred packs of wool; the average price I then gave was twenty ſhillings and ſixpence per ſtone, of twenty-four pound to the ſtone; in 1799, the price was on the average twenty-four ſhillings and ſixpence, making an advance of four ſhillings on the ſtone.

What was that advance owing to?—The inſufficiency from the demand for goods.

How long had that been the caſe?—Not one year; becauſe the price of wool in 1798 was twenty ſhillings and ſixpence.

Have you perceived that, of late, there has been an inſufficiency to ſupply the demand?—Moſt certainly.

In what places?—In Northumberland, and the borders of Scotland.

Have you been of late able to procure any from either of thoſe places?—I have made application without any ſucceſs.

Application for what?—For wool; being informed there was none to be met with, either in Northumberland or on the borders of Scotland.

Of what ſort of wool was that?—The fleece wool grown in that country.

Was

Was it the long combing wool, or the ſhort wool for cloth?—The ſhort wool.

Have you endeavoured to procure it from any other place?—I came up to London with a view of buying a ſort of wool called livery, to mix with the Northumberland wool; and I could only purchaſe about ſeventy packs, a quantity inſufficient for our wants.

What quantity did you want?—I wiſhed to have bought a much more conſiderable quantity.

How much more?—From two to three hundred packs.

What inquiries did you make for the purpoſe of procuring that quantity?—To the beſt of my knowledge I viſited every houſe in the Borough and other places, and could only meet with the quantity I have mentioned, of ſeventy packs.

Did you proſecute thoſe inquiries throughout every part of this town from which the trade have been uſually ſupplied with this commodity?—I called upon every houſe that I was acquainted with.

Did you confine yourſelf as to price? Was it owing to not giving a proper price that you could not be ſupplied?—I was willing to have given ſome advance.

You applied throughout the trade for that particular ſort of wool?—I did.

Have you experienced any diminution of

your own trade, or any inability to ſupply your cuſtomers in conſequence of not having been able to get wool for that purpoſe?—I have experienced ſo much inconvenience as to have been obliged to return, I may ſafely ſay, one half of the orders I had received from the continent of Europe.

From what cauſe?—From the inſufficiency of wool to make the goods.

Was there any other cauſe but that?—None.

What ſort of wool did you want to have executed thoſe orders?—Chiefly the lower ſorts.

Was you not able to procure the proper wool even for the lower ſorts of goods?—I was not.

At what period of time is it you ſpeak of having been under the neceſſity of rejecting one half of the orders you received?—Since theſe laſt two months.

Has it happened that any of your cuſtomers have agreed to poſtpone their orders, in conſequence of the difficulty of ſupplying them?—Several have been willing to poſtone their orders till after the new clip, or the next clip.

Have you any reaſon to believe that the demand in future will be leſs than it has been?—None.

You ſtated that you had been twenty-eight years a merchant employed in this trade; whether

ther of late years you have obſerved a diminution in the quantity of fine wool in this country?—I cannot ſpeak to that ſubject, becauſe the wool we have made uſe of has been chiefly of the growth of Northumberland and the borders of Scotland, mixed with the livery I named before.

What is that ſort of wool that you call the livery?—It is the loweſt ſort of wool but one.

Was it from choice or from neceſſity that that was taken to be mixed with the other?—From choice.

Has the wool been uſed ſooner after ſhearing of late than it uſed to be, or than it ought to be?—It has with us been uſed much ſooner.

How much ſooner?—Four months.

What was that owing to?—To neceſſity; from the inſufficiency of the ſupply.

Examined by the Lords.

You have ſaid there is an inſufficiency of the lower kinds of wool in your markets; do you believe that an Iriſh manufacturer could outbid an Engliſh manufacturer in a competition for wool in the Engliſh market?—I do; becauſe the wages in Ireland would moſt probably not be more than one half of what they are with

with us at Leeds; but I cannot ſpeak exactly upon that head, but I think that at leaſt.

Do you know, or have you heard that the annual exportation of woollen manufactures, paying in Ireland a duty of more than five and a half per cent. has been for ſeveral years of the value of more than ſix hundred thouſand pounds; and in the laſt year, of the value of more than one million ſterling?—Not being in the Iriſh trade, I cannot ſpeak ſo well upon this ſubject as ſome gentlemen that will ſucceed me as witneſſes.

The witneſs was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. WILLIAM HUSTLER was called in again, and examined as follows:

(By a Lord.) What is the price per ton of coal in the manufacturing parts of Yorkſhire?—In ſome parts the price is from five to ſeven ſhillings a ton; I believe in other parts as high as fifteen or ſixteen ſhillings.

What is the medium price?—Not knowing the exact quantities conſumed in each part, I cannot ſtate the medium price. About Bradford and Leeds, I believe, the price is, as I ſaid before, from ſix ſhillings to ſeven ſhillings, or from five to ſeven.

Have not you reaſon to believe that the price is higher at Liverpool?—The preſent price for which

which we ſell coals at Liverpool is ten and ſix-pence a ton.

What do you take to be the expence of carriage per ton from Liverpool to Dublin, to Newry and to Cork?—We have ſent them at five, and from five to ſix ſhillings per ton. The preſent rate is higher, in conſequence of the demand for ſhipping, I believe, for the tranſport ſervice.

In addition then to the price and to freight, do not you know there is alſo an export duty and an import duty?—I know that there are ſuch duties.

Does not Yorkſhire produce, taken in the aggregate, a conſiderable quantity of wool?—A large quantity of wool is grown in the Eaſt-Riding of the county of York.

Is that not conſumed in the Yorkſhire manufactories?—I believe generally ſo.

You ſtated that the ſheep had fallen off, you believed, in many reſpects. Whether you have not heard that, by the nature of many incloſures, as well as by their courſe of farming, as alſo by the change of breed, there are in many paſtures a larger number of ſheep kept upon the ſame ſurface than was formerly kept?—I have heard that a greater number of Southdown ſheep can be kept upon a paſture of a certain ſize than of the Lincolnſhire, or of ſome other breeds of ſheep.

Have

Have you ever had any dealings for wool in Lincolnſhire?—I have bought large quantities of wool in Lincolnſhire.

Has there ever been any manufactories of wool in Lincolnſhire?—I recollect a manufacture being carried on at Louth in Lincolnſhire.

Is that manufactory carried on ſucceſsfully now?—I believe it has declined of late conſiderably; but I cannot ſay whether any is carried on there now or not.

Do you know the reaſon of the decline of the manufactory at Louth?—I believe it is owing in ſome conſiderable degree to the workmen not being ſo well acquainted with the manufacture, and higher wages having been given in conſequence of workmen being brought from diſtant parts.

Do you believe that the dearneſs of fuel is not the principal reaſon why the manufacture of wool cannot be carried on in Lincolnſhire with ſucceſs?—I believe the dearneſs of fuel is a diſcouragement; but the price of coals at Louth, I think, does not much exceed, if any thing, the price of coals in ſome part of Saddleworth. Whether the manufacture is carried on ſucceſsfully I cannot ſpeak poſitively, not having inquired the price very lately at Louth.

The witneſs was directed to withdraw.

Then

Then Mr. JOHN WILLIS was called in, and examined as follows:

Where do you live?—At Stroud in Glouceſterſhire.

In what department o the woollen buſineſs are you employed?—I am a wool-ſtapler for Meſſrs. Jones, Wellington, and Park.

Where do they carry on their buſineſs?—They have one warehouſe at Roſs in Herefordſhire, and one at Dodbridge near Stroud in Glouceſterſhire.

Have you for ſome time paſt been uſed to purchaſe wool in different counties?—For theſe eighteen years paſt, I have been uſed to purchaſe wool in Shropſhire, Herefordſhire, and ſome in Worceſterſhire; but chiefly in Shropſhire and Herefordſhire.

Have you found any difficulty of late years in purchaſing the quantity you wanted?—Yes.

State the circumſtances of difficulty which you have experienced?—By reaſon ſome of the farmers that I bought of, for four or five years paſt, have not had more than half the quantity that I uſed to buy of them.

At what time of the year did you uſually make your purchaſes?—In July and Auguſt.

What ſtock did you lay in, and to laſt you for what time?—I generally bought in a quantity to ſerve till towards the end of September.

Have

Have you found any difficulty in procuring the quantity to laſt you till September?—Yes, we generally buy two or three hundred packs in the ſpring in March or April.

Have you been able to procure that quantity in the preſent year from the growers of wool?—We have applied by letters to different farmers, and they write us word that they do not know of any wool unſold in the country.

From what counties did you receive this anſwer?—From Shropſhire, Herefordſhire, and Somerſetſhire, and from Worceſterſhire.

Up to what time will the quantity you have now in hand laſt?—I think it will laſt till about the end of June.

Have you, during the whole eighteen years that you have been in buſineſs, ever experienced a ſimilar difficulty in procuring wool?—Not till this year.

Are you able to impute this difficulty to any particular cauſe?—I think ſome by the increaſe of trade, and ſome by incloſures.

Do you mean that the quantity capable of being brought to market is diminiſhed by incloſures?—Part of it.

What is the effect that you have obſerved from incloſures upon the growth of wool?—That ſome of the farmers have not had above half the quantity they uſed to have.

Have

Have you obſerved a gradual decreaſe prior to the preſent year, and how many years back? —Yes; for, I think, about four or five years back.

When you make purchaſes of wool, do you purchaſe the whole ſtock of the grower, or parts only?—I purchaſe the whole ſtock of fleeces of each farmer I buy of.

Is that uſual with people in the ſame trade?—I believe it is.

Did you deal with perſons, who were dealing alſo at the ſame time with other perſons in the ſame trade, or with thoſe who excluſively ſold to you the whole wool you had?—They always ſold to me the whole wool that they had.

Are you aware of any place from which, or any means by which you can ſupply the deficiency at preſent experienced?—No.

What is the particular ſort of wool you buy? —The clothing wool.

Have you lately applied at Northampton for the purchaſe of wool?—I was at Northampton laſt Wedneſday and Thurſday was a week.

Did you then apply to any wool-ſtaplers for wool?—I inquired of different wool-ſtaplers what wool they had by them, if they had any ſorts; they ſaid, they had very little but what was under orders.

Could you find any clothing wool?—No.

Did

Did you get any from the perſons to whom you applied; and if you did, what quantity in proportion to what you wanted?—I did not get any.

From your acquaintance with the manufactures, are you of opinion that the manufactures could occupy more wool if more could be ſupplied for them?—I believe they would, according to our orders.

Are you capable of forming a judgment whether the preſent dearth ariſes from any temporary cauſes, or from ſuch cauſes as are likely to continue?—From ſuch cauſes as are likely to continue.

Examined by the Lords.

Whether you have made inquiry in any one pariſh in England, with a view to aſcertain the number of ſheep raiſed in that pariſh before incloſure, compared with the number raiſed in the pariſh after the incloſure?—I have not made any inquiry.

In no one inſtance?—No.

What prices did you offer at Northampton?—I aſked them what prices they ſold for; they ſaid they had none to ſell.

Did you tempt them with a price?—I did not; becauſe they ſaid they were all under orders.

Whether you conſider that the ſheep bred upon

upon the uninclosed land produces in any degree, either as to quality or quantity, such wool as is produced by the sheep in inclosures, which are taken more care of, and where there is a greater attention to the breed?—The wool that is bred upon uninclosed land is certainly better in quality, but it does not produce so much as on the inclosed lands, or of the cross breed.

The witness was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. JEREMIAH NAYLOR was called in, and examined as follows:

Are you a buyer of cloth, and where do you live?—I am a buyer of cloth, and I live at Wakefield in Yorkshire.

Have you dealt considerably in the purchase of cloth and coatings, and for how long time?—I have dealt considerably in cloth and coatings for these twenty years past, in business for myself. I have attended regularly Leeds market, which is the town where we buy our cloth in the raw state, for twenty-four years last past.

Have you observed any diminution in the quantity of cloth of late; any diminution in the supply?—I have experienced a very great deficiency within these last nine months past, except within these two months past there have

been rather more goods in the market, owing to a temporary ſtoppage in our remittances from the Continent.

From what part of the Continent did that happen?—Hamburgh.

Can you ſtate to what cauſe that diminution of the trade was owing?—It was owing to want of remittances from the Continent that there was more cloth in the laſt two months in the market.

Before the laſt two months, what was the ſtate of the market?—The ſtate of the market from June to laſt February was ſuch that I was not able to buy a ſufficient ſupply of goods for the orders that I had, and was obliged to leave my orders unexecuted.

Can you ſtate to what cauſe it was owing that you experienced that inability to ſupply your cuſtomers?—In my opinion it is owing to the increaſed demand we have had for theſe three or four years laſt paſt; the demand has been ſuch that the wool, the manufacturers inform me, is grown ſo ſcarce, that they cannot get a ſufficient ſupply of the low and middle priced wools to make this kind of cloths of.

Did you, in conſequence of not being able to ſupply your cuſtomers, loſe the orders that you were obliged to return, or have you executed them ſince?—I could not execute them

at

at that time, for the reaſon that I have given, and have not had it in my power to execute them ſince, it being for the American trade; and if I did not ſend them the laſt autumn, I was not to execute them.

Are there at this time any orders for particular cloths that you are not able to ſupply?—I have at preſent orders for goods; and when I came from the country I went round among the manufacturers, and was not able to meet with half the ſupply of goods that I wanted; particular goods.

From the knowledge that you have of the trade, do you think it will now admit of any export of wool without great inconvenience and injury to the trade?—It is my opinion, that the trade of this country is gradually increaſing, and that it will not admit of any exportation of wool from this country; and it is my opinion, that if we receive our remittances from the Continent, that there is not a ſufficient ſupply of wool to execute the orders that we have at preſent upon hand.

Do you know of any cauſe, or have you any reaſon to apprehend either that the demand for your goods will be diminiſhed, or the growth of wool increaſed in this country?—As to the growth of wool, it is a queſtion that I cannot anſwer, becauſe I am no buyer of wool; and

in anſwer, whether the ſale of cloth is likely to increaſe, I have not the leaſt doubt of it, if we receive remittances from the Continent.

The circumſtance of not receiving remittances from the Continent, is that temporary or likely to continue?—I look upon it as temporary.

Do you know whether a conſiderable quantity of Spaniſh wool is uſed in the cloth manufacture?—I am not a dealer in wool; I can only anſwer that I buy cloths of that deſcription, which are made entirely of Spaniſh wool.

Do you know whether within the laſt eight or nine months there was any difficulty of procuring Spaniſh wool?—Within theſe laſt eight or nine months I had conſiderable orders for that article; I was obliged to ſuſpend executing them for the want of Spaniſh wool, and could not execute them till a freſh ſupply was imported into this country.

From what period have you obſerved the increaſe in the demand in the Leeds market for cloth?—The increaſe in the demand has been gradual for theſe four or five years laſt paſt, and my own trade has been gradually increaſing from that time.

Should the remittances come from the Continent, would the trade of this year be leſs than the few later years, or greater than formerly?—

The

The returns of my own trade would be conſiderably greater; and I look in general that it would be the ſame all through the country if we could get wool to ſupply the orders that are at preſent from the Continent.

Are you then aware that the trade can ſuffer any thing from any cauſe except from the export of its wool?—It is my opinion, that our trade will yearly increaſe if we can find ſufficiency of wool to execute it; the only ſtoppage of the increaſe of the woollen trade of this country will be for want of wool.

In your judgment will the trade ſuffer if any part of the wool of this country is exported?—It is my opinion that it will certainly be ſo.

Examined by the Lords,

Whether under all the circumſtances you have ſtated, you ſee any near probability of wool being exported to any conſiderable extent?—That is a queſtion I cannot anſwer, for I am no dealer in wool myſelf.

Do you happen to know that the demand for woollen manufactures has greatly increaſed, to the amount of millions, within the laſt two or three years from the States of America, from the Britiſh Continental Colonies, from the foreign Weſt Indies, from the Eaſt Indies, from

Africa, from Portugal, from Germany, and from Ireland?—From Portugal I can anſwer very ſafely, that it has very much increaſed of late; alſo from America; as to any other parts mentioned I do not know.

From Ireland?—I do not do any buſineſs to Ireland.

Whether you think that other countries are likely to enter into a competition for the raw material, with a country which is manufacturing and exporting to an extent fully equal to or beyond the produce of the raw material?—I can anſwer that queſtion no otherwiſe than thus: That it is only Ireland that will have the raw material from us; and not being acquainted with that kingdom, I cannot give any other anſwer.

Has not an increaſe taken place in the manufacture, between the 25th of March 1799, and the 25th of March laſt, in Yorkſhire?—There is a great increaſe.

It amounts to nearly one-fourth increaſe?—It is a very great increaſe; I cannot anſwer what it amounts to.

You ſaid you found a difficulty in executing ſome orders for the American market?—Yes.

What is the credit in the American market?—The credit to America varies. There are different

different credits. Some people pay us very early. They are but very few. To others we give a twelve months credit.

Is it not more than twelve months? do not you think it pretty reaſonable in the American market, if you get your returns within two years?—I am obliged to give longer credit. But I make it a rule if any houſe takes a longer credit with me for any parcel of goods than the time ſtipulated, I am not very eager to ſend them any more goods.

It is underſtood that the general credit in the American market was much longer than in the European market; the conſequence is, that if there happens to be a great demand in Europe, American orders are of courſe the laſt executed. Is that ſo?—The orders that we receive from America are all at twelve months credit. If our correſpondent does not remit us at that time, he pays us intereſt from the twelve months; and, as I ſaid before, if he does not pay us pretty near the time of the uſual credit, we do not ſend him any more goods.

The American credit being a longer credit than the European credit, the conſequence is, that the European market will be firſt ſupplied; and if there is a deficiency of the quantity ordered, that deficiency will ariſe upon the American commiſſion?—We give as long credit to

the orders that we have even for our Engliſh correſpondents as we do to our correſpondents in America; our general credit is twelve months.

Your houſe is the principal houſe in the American trade?—We do very largely in that trade; but I can affirm that our credit to London is twelve months, and it is the ſame to the Continent of America.

Conſidering that wool is ſo bulky a commodity, do not you conceive that it would not be difficult by a revenue regulation to prevent the clandeſtine exportation of it?—That is a queſtion I cannot anſwer; I was never in the wool trade, nor I do not know the regulations there are upon the coaſt of this country to protect it or of Ireland.

Do not you conceive that it would not be a difficult matter to throw very great impediment in the way of a clandeſtine trade?—It would be difficult in my opinion.

Do you believe that there is any clandeſtine exportation of wool at preſent?—I do believe that there was formerly a great deal of wool clandeſtinely ſent from this country before the war to France; but, ſince the war, the manufactories have ceaſed, and therefore they have no occaſion for our wools.

Do you think that, whilſt the demand for wool in this country ſo much exceeds the quantity that they can get for manufacture, that the riſk of the clandeſtine exportation is worth any man's running at the additional price he would get for his wool?—Whenever there comes a peace, which I hope will ſome time happen, I have no doubt but it will be ſmuggled, and will leave this country in very large quantities as it did before the war.

Do you think any greater quantity will go than before the war?—I have not the leaſt doubt of it, if the wool is exported to Ireland, that it will be impoſſible, with all the exertions that government can uſe, to prevent it from being ſmuggled or clandeſtinely carried into other parts of Europe.

The Witneſs was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. BENJAMIN GOTT was called in; and having been ſworn, was examined as follows:

Are you concerned in any branch of the cloth trade or woollen manufactures of this country?—Yes.

Where do you carry them on?—At Leeds in Yorkſhire.

Is that the place of your reſidence?—Yes.

Are

Are you acquainted with the woollen trade to Ireland?—Yes, I am.

For how many years back have you been acquainted with that trade?—During my apprenticeſhip, and ſince that period, twenty years or more.

From the knowledge you have of that trade, what, in your judgment, would be the conſequence of permitting wool to be exported to that country?—I apprehend, that under the circumſtances in which the Union with Ireland will place us, that is, allowing the wool of this country to be exported to Ireland free of duty, whilſt, on the other hand, the protecting duties in Ireland, are to continue being ſeven pence halfpenny per yard on all Britiſh milled woollens imported into Ireland, and ten per cent. on that duty, making a duty of eight pence and a fraction per yard, the effect will be to take the wool from this country to manufacture it in Ireland.

Do you think that there is more wool in this country than is ſufficient for the immediate ſupply of its own manufactures?—No, certainly not.

If any wool ſhould be ſent from this country to Ireland, would there be enough remaining

in

in order to carry on the manufactures of the country?—Certainly not.

What do you think would be the effect of this decreaſe of manufactures upon the manufacturers themſelves?—The effect of the decreaſe of the wool would be, that the manufacturer muſt either follow the raw material, or he muſt be a burthen to the pariſh in which he lives.

What is the average value of the woollen drapery imported into Ireland?—There are two deſcriptions of woollen cloth exported to Ireland; one broad cloth, the other narrow cloth. The average price of narrow cloth I eſtimate at three ſhillings and four pence per yard; the loweſt general price being about one ſhilling and eight pence per yard, of which the Iriſh, from one ſhilling and eight pence to half a crown, purchaſe large quantities even under the duty of eight pence and a fraction per yard, as I have already mentioned, and extending generally from one ſhilling and eight pence a yard to ſix ſhillings a yard; the mean value being three ſhillings and four pence. The average price of broad cloths exported to Ireland I ſhould eſtimate at ſix ſhillings and eight pence per yard.

Do you know the reaſon why within the laſt year there has been ſo much a larger demand

mand for cloths for the ſupply of Ireland than formerly?—There have been two cauſes; one is the increaſed army eſtabliſhment of Ireland; the other is, that during the rebellion in Ireland no cloth of any conſequence was exported from this country, the ſhops there were of courſe exhauſted of their ſtocks on hand, and when peace was re-eſtabliſhed they purchaſed a larger quantity than uſual.

Do you happen to know whether the Iriſh do not excluſively manufacture for the clothing of their own military in the country?—The Iriſh manufacture, I believe, excluſively for their own army eſtabliſhments, and they manufacture all the remainder of their wool into cloth; but that not being equal altogether to the demands of the country, they draw the remainder of their ſupply from Great Britain, becauſe they are not allowed to poſſeſs our raw material.

Explain what you mean by the remainder?—The army of Ireland is ſupplied from the manufactures of Ireland by the regulations of the Iriſh government. As I underſtand the increaſed ſupply of the army operates in this manner, there being a larger number of troops in the country than uſual, more of the wool of the country is neceſſarily employed in clothing them,

them, and in finding bedding and blankets; conſequently, there is a greater demand for other deſcriptions of cloth.

Then you are to be underſtood, that it was to ſupply the other deſcriptions of cloth which the Iriſh could not ſupply, on account of the manufacture for the uſe of the armies?—Yes; and alſo from the neceſſity of their army being clothed rapidly, they were obliged to take ſome part of the ſupply of their army from this country.

(By a Lord.) You have ſaid that the reaſon why the Iriſh army is uſually clothed by cloth manufactured in Ireland, was in conſequence of a regulation of the Iriſh government?—I do not know the circumſtance of my own knowledge.

It is either by an act of parliament or by a regulation of the Iriſh government. Whether you conceive that if it was not for that act or that regulation of the Iriſh government, that the army in Ireland would be clothed with Iriſh cloth?—I apprehend they would be clothed with Iriſh cloth, when the duty as it now ſtands is eight pence or more per yard on Engliſh cloth; becauſe I frequently have found in the courſe of my buſineſs with merchants in Ireland, that there are times when particular deſcrip-

deſcriptions of Iriſh manufactured cloths are, as they informed me, ſo nearly on a balance with the cloths of this country, that they occaſionally purchaſe them, and at other times the duty prevents them.

Is not the Iriſh cloth extremely inferior to the Engliſh cloth?—Crimſon coatings, ſcarlet coatings, of the manufacture of Ireland, are ſo nearly on a par with the manufactures of ſimilar deſcriptions of goods in this country, that ſometimes they are purchaſed from hence; and at other times, they find it more their intereſt to purchaſe their own manufactures.

Do you mean to ſay they are like in appearance; or that Iriſh cloth, in fact, of the ſame price, is conſidered to be as good as Engliſh cloth; that it wears as well?—I have no doubt it wears as well, of the deſcription of cloth which I ſpeak of as in competition with our own manufacture.

The witneſs was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. JOSIAS NOTTAGE was called in; and having been ſworn, was examined as follows:

Where do you live?—At Bocking in Eſſex.

In what buſineſs are you?—A manufacturer.

In what ſtate is the woollen manufacturers at that place?—Quite on the decline.

How

How long has it been the caſe that the woollen manufacturers have been declining at that place?—They have been declining ſome years.

Can you ſtate the reaſon of that decline?—Partly from rivalſhip in the north, and partly from the Spaniſh war.

Have the manufactories in Yorkſhire any advantage in reſpect to machinery over the manufactories eſtabliſhed at Bocking?—Yes; they have.

In conſequence of this decline of the manufactures, what has been the effect upon the poor rates there?—They have been increaſed enormouſly.

In what proportion?—I have known them to be as low as eight ſhillings in the pound; the laſt year they were twenty-four ſhillings and ſixpence, and they are upon the increaſe.

Do you know of any other cauſe of producing this increaſe, excepting the decline of the manufactures?—I ſuppoſe the high price of grain at preſent rather increaſes it than not.

Is the principal cauſe of it the decline of the manufacturers?—It is.

Have the neighbourhood felt an increaſe in their poor's rates, where the manufactures have declined likewiſe?—They have.

The witneſs was directed to withdraw.

Then

Then Mr. JAMES MASTERMAN was called in; and having been ſworn, was examined as follows:

Do you know what is the amount of the poor's rates at Lavenham in Suffolk?—They are now thirty-two ſhillings in the pound, and are likely to be forty ſhillings.

Do you know at what the poor's rates ſtood four years ago in the ſame place?—From eleven to twelve ſhillings; they will be forty ſhillings in the next quarter.

Were they the laſt year the ſame as at preſent?—I think they were.

Was there a woollen manufacture carried on when the rates were at ten ſhillings?—Yes.

What is become of that manufacture?—It is carrying on now in a ſmaller degree.

But it is materially declined?—Yes.

How many manufactures are there there?—Only two of any conſequence.

How many were there ſome time back?—I cannot exactly anſwer to that; there were ſeveral.

The witneſs was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS was called in; and having been ſworn, was examined as follows:

At

At what place do you live, and what buſineſs are you?—I live at Shepton Mallet in Somerſetſhire; I am a clothier.

For what length of time have you purſued that buſineſs?—Upwards of twenty-ſix years.

Is the quantity of Engliſh wool manufactured at that place greater or leſs than it uſed to be?—I think it is conſiderably leſs.

Is that the caſe with the manufactories in that neighbourhood?—I conſider it is.

Do you know to what parts of the country that manufacture has been transferred?—Principally to Yorkſhire.

What ſpecies of cloth uſed to be manufactured at Shepton Mallet?—Cloth at ſix or ſeven ſhillings a yard, in great quantities. I believe there are not any now manufactured at that price.

Have you lately been in Ireland?—I have. I returned laſt night direct from Dublin.

Do you know whether, at this time, there is in Ireland any cloth manufacture going on?—There are ſome cloth manufactures going on in Ireland, and that are increaſing in their manufactures, and making a very good article.

At what place have you yourſelf ſeen a manufacture going on in Ireland?—At Middleton near Cork, and at ſeveral other places near Cork.

Has that manufactory near Cork been long

eſtabliſhed, or is it lately built?—I believe it has been built within ſix or ſeven years; I cannot ſpeak accurately as to a year or two.

Is it a conſiderable building?—It is a very conſiderable building indeed; ſuch as we have very few in England in point of extent and magnitude, and capable of making a great quantity of goods. It is built in every reſpect to ſave manual labour as much as poſſible.

In what reſpect is that circumſtance conſidered in the conſtruction of the manufactory; how is that provided for?—So much is done by water.

How far is this manufactory from Cork?—About twelve Iriſh miles.

How many Engliſh miles is that?—About ſixteen Engliſh miles, calculating eleven Iriſh miles to fourteen Engliſh.

Is it nearer or further from Dublin than from Cork?—It is at a greater diſtance from Dublin.

What ſort of road is there between Cork and this manufactory?—At ſome ſeaſons of the year a good road; at moſt ſeaſons I believe.

Did you obſerve ſome of the cloth manufactured at that place?—I have ſeen a great deal of the cloth manufactured at that place in the hands of men I have been in the habit of doing buſineſs with for upwards of twenty years: conſiderably

conſiderably more than twenty years I have been doing buſineſs with many houſes who now purchaſe, I believe, frequently, goods manufactured at Middleton.

Do ſeveral of your former cuſtomers deal with this manufactory?—Many of them in Cork, many of them in Dublin; ſeveral of them in Limerick, and ſome in Waterford.

When you ſupplied thoſe cuſtomers at the different places you ſtated, at what place did you carry on your manufactory?—I carried it on where I do now, at Shepton Mallet; I do not ſay that I do not do buſineſs with the ſame perſons now; but they buy at that manufactory, goods they tell me of the like quality, and full as well worth their money, if not lower, than I can ſupply them with, or they tell me than they can have from other manufacturers in England.

Did you obſerve whether the manufactured article was equal in goodneſs with the ſame kind of article manufactured in this country?—I conſider it a very good article that they now manufacture, and improving in quality; they are nearly as good as thoſe ſent from the weſt of England.

Do you know whether other perſons in Shepton Mallet, beſides yourſelf, uſed formerly to ſend their goods to Ireland?—Several houſes

in the town of Shepton Mallet have long been in the habit of doing buſineſs in Ireland, and do at this preſent time conſiderable buſineſs; a regular trade.

You ſpoke of the decline of trade at Shepton Mallet: do you know whether your neighbours as well as yourſelf, have loſt part of their cuſtom in conſequence of this manufactory being eſtabliſhed in Ireland?—I ſpoke of the decline of one branch only of the trade at Shepton Mallet; the coarſe trade.

When you formed a compariſon between the article manufactured at Middleton manufactory in Ireland, with the weſtern manufactures in this country, are the goods wrought at the weſtern manufactory of this country, equal in goodneſs to thoſe manufactured in other parts of this kingdom?—I think them fully equal in quality to the goods of every other part of England.

Do you mean that the Iriſh are equally good?—Yes, the Iriſh manufacture.

The queſtion aſked is this, Whether the goods manufactured in the weſt of England are equal in goodneſs to thoſe manufactured in other parts of this kingdom?—Fully equal to any manufactured in this country.

Did you ſtate what ſort of cloths you ſaw yourſelf at the manufactory at Middleton?—I did not.

Was

Was it the fine ſort or the coarſe cloths that you ſaw manufactured at Middleton?—Both coarſe and fine.

Do you know of any other manufactory in Ireland, or have you ſeen any other cloth manufactory in Ireland?—I know of others; but from delicacy, being a manufacturer myſelf, I declined going into their manufactories.

The witneſs was directed to withdraw.

The counſel were directed to withdraw.

The counſel and the witneſs were called in, and the witneſs directed to confine his anſwers to facts within his own knowledge.

The witneſs was aſked, Have you yourſelf ſeen any other manufactory in Ireland, beſides that at Middleton which you ſpoke of?—I have ſeen ſeveral cloth manufactories of coarſe goods.

Is that manufactory at Middleton which you yourſelf ſaw capable of carrying on buſineſs to a conſiderable extent?—Yes, it is.

Prior to the eſtabliſhment of this manufactory at Middleton, you ſupplied perſons at Limerick, Cork, and thoſe other places, who were your cuſtomers: did you uſe to ſupply them wholly with the articles of the deſcription

that is now bought from the Middleton manufactory?—No, not wholly; it is cuſtomary for merchants to deal with a variety of manufacturers.

Did you know that thoſe cuſtomers of yours who are now ſupplied in part from the Middleton manufactory, did derive any part of their ſupply before that from any other Iriſh manufactory?—I cannot ſay.

Is it your judgment reſpecting this manufactory at Middleton, that there would be any difficulty if Engliſh wool were exported to that place of carrying on the manufactory there to advantage?—No difficulty whatever, but to greater advantage than I can manufacture at preſent.

In what reſpect to greater advantage than you could manufacture at Shepton Mallet?—Becauſe much leſs oppoſition will be given in Ireland to the introduction of Machinery than what I feel and others in the town in which I live. I have upon introducing machinery been obliged to apply to government for military protection, and they have granted it to me; the town collectively has applied for military protection before introducing machinery.

In point of fact, has machinery been introduced into the manufactory at Shepton Mallet?—It has in a degree.

Is

Is it in as great an extent as it might be introduced into a new manufactory in another country?—By no means; I would myself introduce machines that I do not now make use of, but for the great opposition I know I must meet with from the labouring manufacturers.

You have desisted in consequence of that opposition from a full introduction of machinery into your manufactory?—I have.

The machinery which you have not ventured to introduce at Shepton Mallet, but which might be introduced in a new place, what species of the work is that to carry on?—It is, in the dressing part, a gig-mill.

Is there any other machinery besides that, not yet introduced, which might be introduced?—There is.

What is it?—Shearing by water.

Any other besides that?---Those are the principal machinery; there is a brushing machine besides.

Can you state what difference of advantage per cent. in the manufactory would be derived from a full introduction of all that machinery?—It cannot but be very considerable.

About what extent; ten, twenty, or more or less per cent?—I have never considered that question.

Do you know how that manufactory at Mid-

dleton is circumſtanced with reſpect to a ſupply of coals and fuel?—I preſume they muſt have them from England.

How is the manufactory at Shepton Mallet ſupplied with that article?—Very well ſupplied; but I conſider that the advantage gained by having our coals cheaper at Shepton Mallet than they have at Middleton, or in other parts where manufactories may be erected, if Engliſh wool is introduced into Ireland, that that ſmall advantage would be much more than counteracted by the far greater advantage in Ireland, ariſing from labour being cheaper, the lower claſs of people in Ireland not being in the habit of getting ſo much money as our manufacturers, and not in the habit of living in the comfortable manner that our labouring manufacturers do, if they are induſtrious.

Do you know whether at that place, at Middleton, there are advantages in the article of houſe-rent, and all the neceſſaries of life?—I can only ſpeak to that from hearſay.

Are proviſions much cheaper in Ireland than at Shepton Mallet?—I have been abſent from Shepton Mallet theſe three months, and therefore I cannot anſwer that queſtion. I conceive that proviſions have advanced at Shepton Mallet, bread in particular.

Whether you have derived ſufficient knowledge

ledge to ſay whether a manufacturer could live cheaper at Middleton than at Shepton Mallet, every thing conſidered?—They are in the habit of living poorer than the labouring people of Shepton Mallet, and of courſe are content with what does not amount to ſo much money. I apprehend alſo that the gentlemen of Ireland are at preſent very deſirous to increaſe manufactories in that kingdom, and that they are inclined, where they ſee a probability of men laying out their money, to give employment to the poor, that they will give them their lands upon low leaſes, as they term it.

In your judgement, would the circumſtance of additional machinery introduced into a new manufactory, alone counterbalance the difference in the price of fuel at Shepton Mallet and at Middleton?—Greatly to the advantage of the Middleton manufactory, or others that may be eſtabliſhed upon the ſame principle.

[The witneſs was directed to withdraw.]

How long ago is it ſince theſe riots took place on account of the machinery at Shepton Mallet?—I believe about ſix years ago, in September laſt, I had ſome warehouſes burnt down that I believe were ſet on fire by our manufacturers; I cannot prove it.

What

What riot occaſioned your application to government for the interpoſition of the military?—I was erecting a mill with an intention to introduce new machinery; at that time our manufacturers, in general, threatened that it ſhould be pulled down.

Was that a gig-mill?—No; they were ſcribbling machines.

You returned from Ireland laſt night?—Yes.

How long were you in Ireland?—I was in Ireland about ten weeks; two or three days more or leſs, I cannot ſay.

You mentioned having had ſeveral communications in Dublin with different perſons relative to woollen manufactures; did you underſtand that in that neighbourhood they were going to erect woollen manufactories, under the idea of the Union taking place?—I cannot ſay under the idea of the Union taking place.

Do you know the price of wool in Ireland?—I do not.

Do you conſider the woollen manufactory to be on the decline throughout the weſtern counties of England?—No; I do not believe the woollen manufactories, generally ſpeaking, to be on the decline in the weſt of England; but

I well

I well know that the decline of the coarſe woollens is increaſing.

That is, that a particular branch of the woollen manufacture is on the decline in the weſtern counties?—I believe ſo.

Do you not principally aſcribe that decline to the oppoſition made by the common people to the introduction of machines?—I do very much upon this principle, that the Yorkſhire manufacturers can with much greater facility introduce machinery than we can in the weſt of England; and in conſequence of their poſſeſſing machinery before we introduced the ſcribblers and carders, the machines I was ſpeaking of before, they in a great meaſure poſſeſſed the trade of the low woollens, and poſſeſſing it they will keep it; and much to their credit. The oppoſition that we generally meet with in the weſt of England to introducing machinery is ſo great, that until the Yorkſhire manufacturers have ſtolen the article away from us, we are almoſt afraid to introduce it.

Do you not know that in ſome mills in your country where ſuch machinery has been introduced, ſmall detachments of troops have been conſtantly kept to defend thoſe mills?—Whenever applied for they have conſtantly been given us.

Do

Do you know the ſort of wool there is in Ireland?—They have ſo little clothing wool at preſent in Ireland, that I have not been particularly attentive to noticing the wool, though intimate with the manufacturers in Cork that conſume a great deal of the wools of Ireland.

What is not clothing wool?—Wool of ſo long a ſtaple that it muſt be combed and not ſcribbled. Scribbling is by ſhort cards.

Whether you underſtand that any new manufactories are erecting without any reference to the Union?—Only this of Mr. Allen's.

Whether the clothing wool of England will be neceſſary to the Manufactures of Ireland?—Yes; it will give them an opportunity to manufacture cloth of a quality that they now have not an opportunity to do.

You have ſaid that at Shepton Mallet the ſupply of coals is at a low and reaſonable price?—I believe they coſt us from five-pence halfpenny to ſixpence a buſhel.

Do you conſider that as being at a low price?—I do not conſider it as at a low price, becauſe we pay more for it than we did ſome years ago. I believe a penny a buſhel more, beſides an advance of carriage.

At how much is it a ton?—We buy it by the buſhel.

What

What is the weight of your buſhel?—I cannot ſay.

You uſe machinery in the courſe of your manufactory?—Yes.

By what means do you put the machinery into action?—By water; the ſtreams of water in Ireland are very general.

Whether you have travelled over any conſiderable portion of Ireland, ſo as to form a judgment upon that ſubject?—I have travelled through moſt parts of Ireland, Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Belfaſt, Newry.

Do you happen to be informed whether the gig-mill and ſcribbling machines were not violently oppoſed in Yorkſhire?—I do not know.

Have your people got an idea, that the ſcribbling machine and the gig-mill are prohibited by law?—We manufacturers had no idea of the kind.

Is that an idea prevailing among the labourers?—Yes; it prevails amongſt the labourers, that a gig-mill is a machine that ought not to be uſed.

Do not you know there have been trials about it, whether it was not forbidden by law?—I believe there was a trial in Wiltſhire, at Saliſbury, ſome time ago, which terminated in favour of the manufacturers to introduce the gig-mill.

By

By what means have you come at that information?—Having been told it by manufacturers who were engaged in it.

You ſtated, you went over to Ireland for orders; did thoſe orders decreaſe in conſequence of new manufactories by machinery in Ireland?—I do not know that they did; for the conſumption is increaſing there.

By conſumption, do you mean demand?—The general conſumption of goods in Ireland is increaſing, of every ſort of goods, I believe, though not at this preſent moment.

When you ſay the conſumption has increaſed, do you underſtand that the demand for Britiſh manufactures has increaſed?—There is very little demand for them at this preſent time.

Do not you know that for the laſt year, down to the preſent period, there has been a greater demand in point of value, for Britiſh manufactures, and particularly for the woollen manufactures, than at any preceding period whatever, to Ireland?—I do; but I conſider the country as greatly overſtocked with goods, and the demand for goods is very trifling; there is a ſufficient reaſon for the large importation of goods laſt year, and particularly of woollens, in conſequence of the rebellion in that country the preceding year, when men in general had

run

run out their ſtocks, and there was very little importation of goods from this country for a twelvemonth, during the rebellion.

Do you not know that in the preceding year the demand was very nearly as great as in the laſt year?—I was told by men dealing in the article in Ireland, that the importation of woollen goods the laſt year, far exceeded any year preceding.

Do you know that of your own knowledge?—I do not: I know it from my cuſtomers and many other cauſes.

If you had introduced the machinery in your own manufactory that you wiſhed to have introduced, would you be afraid of any rivalſhip in Ireland?—If they had the wool from this country I ſhould be afraid of a rivalſhip in the middling article of goods; and I ſee no reaſon why the manufacturer in Ireland ſhould not manufacture fine goods upon as good terms as I do myſelf, or any other manufacturer having the opportunity to introduce the like machinery.

You ſtated, that the cauſe of the removal of the manufactory from Somerſet to Yorkſhire, was on account of the oppoſition to the machines: do you know any other cauſe than that?—That is the principal cauſe, as they are enabled

enabled to get up coarſe goods lower than we can, having introduced machinery earlier, and being in poſſeſſion of the trade.

Have you any reaſon to know, that proviſions being cheaper in Yorkſhire than in the weſtern counties, has been the cauſe of the removal of the trade?—I have ever heard it attributed to the more general introduction of machinery than we have in the weſt of England, than from any other cauſe.

You have ſtated, that you travelled through Ireland, and have ſeen a number of ſtreams of water in that country; is there not a great fall belonging to thoſe ſtreams which is a greater advantage to the manufactures, than the ſtreams themſelves?—I cannot anſwer that queſtion, not having examined the falls. The greater the fall, certainly the more general muſt be the advantage.

The witneſs was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. NATHANIEL WATHEN was called in; and having been ſworn, was examined as follows:

Are you engaged in the cloth manufactory at Stroud in Glouceſterſhire?—Yes.

Do

Do you know whether the manufacture of Engliſh wool has of late decreaſed in the pariſhes of Stroud, Hampton, Biſley, Stonehouſe, and Uley, in Glouceſterſhire?—It has very materially decreaſed.

For how many years paſt has it been upon the decreaſe?—About ſeven or eight years.

To what has that decreaſe been owing?—To the more early introduction of machinery in the north of England than in the ſouth-weſt.

Has there been a greater quantity of Spaniſh wool manufactured at the places you have mentioned of late, than there has been of Engliſh wool?—I conceive there has been a greater number of bags of Spaniſh wool manufactured, than of packs of Engliſh.

Are there many machines of conſiderable uſe in the manufactory, which the manufacturer of Glouceſterſhire is, from apprehenſions of tumult, or other ſimilar circumſtances, debarred the uſe of?—There is one very important piece of machinery that the manufacturers of Glouceſterſhire have not yet ventured to introduce, denominated ſhearing machines, from the uſe of which, great advantage would accrue to the manufacturer, if it was introduced.

Are coals in Glouceſterſhire dearer in the manufacturing part of that county per ton, than

the price mentioned at this bar by Mr. Huſtler, at which they could be delivered at Newry and at Dublin?—The price of coals is as much as two ſhillings per ton dearer in all the manufacturing pariſhes in Glouceſterſhire, than they are at Newry or Dublin.

What is the average price per ton in Glouceſterſhire?—From eighteen to twenty-one ſhillings per ton.

How much per cent. upon the ſuperfine cloth made in Glouceſterſhire does the expence of coals amount to, where there is an adequate ſupply of water?—Not to more than from five to ten ſhillings per cent. The expence of coals in the manufacture of cloth made of Engliſh wool, amounts probably, or nearly, from twelve to fifteen ſhillings per cent.

It has been ſtated, that the comparative rate of carriage from the weſtern counties to Ireland and to Leeds, is in favour of Ireland; how do you account for the fact that the Yorkſhire manufactory conſumes a part of the wool of the weſtern counties of England, though it might ſtay at home, without any expence of carriage?—A part of the wool of the weſtern counties I ſpeak of. I before ſtated that machinery was earlier introduced into Yorkſhire than into Glouceſterſhire; the conſequence of which was

that

that the Yorkſhire manufacturer derived great advantage, and of courſe trade diverged from the weſtern counties into Yorkſhire, where it has ſince continued; the weſtern manufacturer having been engaged in the manufacture of Spaniſh wool to a much greater extent than formerly.

Do you therefore account for the carriage of wool from the weſt to Yorkſhire for the purpoſe of manufacture, upon the principle that the weſtern counties are themſelves occupied with the manufacture of Spaniſh wool; and alſo that the Britiſh wool exported from theſe counties can, by means of machinery, be leſs expenſively manufactured in Yorkſhire?—I conceive that to be the caſe.

The witneſs was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. ROBERT MEARS was called in; and having been ſworn, was examined as follows:

Of what buſineſs are you, and where do you live?—I am a public dyer of wool, and live at Frome in Somerſetſhire.

Have you obſerved of late a leſs quantity of

wool brought to your manufactory for the purpose of being dyed than used to be?—I have observed lately a less quantity of English wool, I believe about one-third.

Has this been owing to a diminution in the trade, or to a diminution in the produce of the wool?—To a want of wool by the manufacturer.

Is that the case in the neighbourhood of Frome?—That is the case.

What sort of wool is it that you have been accustomed to, and that you have observed a deficiency in?—The wool that makes livery cloth, and the wool that makes second cloth.

Is that the long combing wool or the short?—Neither; it is a finer sort than the combing; it is wool which makes cloth from seven shillings a yard to twelve.

Have you observed in the towns of Westbury, Frome, and Warminster, and at Shepton Mallet, that the manufacture of English wool has greatly decreased?—It has.

What is the price of coals at Frome, Warminster, and Westbury, per ton?—At Frome it is from fifteen shillings to twenty shillings per ton; at Warminster and Westbury it is dearer, the carriage being above seven miles further.

Where

Where are the coals ſupplied from to thoſe places?—From Mendip.

Is that the neareſt place of ſupply?—It is.

The witneſs was directed to withdraw.

No. VI.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thurſday, May 1, 1800.

Part of the DEBATE on the 6th RESOLUTION for the UNION, in a Committee of the whole Houſe.

Mr. PITT having moved the 6th Reſolution,

Mr. Peel roſe. Reſpecting the meaſure now before the Committee, I muſt repeat, in part, the opinion which I delivered laſt year, when I did myſelf the honour of addreſſing this Houſe.—I have, however, to regret exceedingly that the Reſolutions, now before us, aſſume a different ſhape from what I had reaſon to expect from the known candour of thoſe with whom the Reſolutions originated. I have heard the

the evidence given at your bar, reſpecting the woollen trade of this country.—I reſpect ſo much the feelings of others, that if I thought their ſuppoſed grievances would be removed without danger to the meaſure of the Union itſelf, I would ſay the Petitioners ought to be attended to, and I would ſay further, that I would wiſh them compleat ſucceſs in the object they profeſs to have in view.—I feel for another deſcription of perſons alſo, and for another trade, in which I am deeply concerned, I mean the cotton manufactory of this kingdom, and the manufacturers of it.—We can, perhaps, boaſt an equality with the woollen manufactory in point of extent and utility; but it is far from being my intention, (which I ſay for the purpoſe of preventing any miſunderſtanding), to convey any idea that there is, between theſe two very important branches of the trade and manufactures of this country, any unfriendly rivalſhip: on the contrary, I am perſuaded there is but one idea entertained by the members of both upon the ſubject of the general welfare of the empire. I have heard the evidence at the bar, as I have ſaid already, and I muſt ſay, that the principal hoſtility of the Iriſh reſolutions now before us, ſeem to be directed againſt, and are certainly calculated to affect,

that valuable branch of our trade, the calicoes and muſlins of this country.

In the year 1785 I was at your bar, a petitioner, expreſſing a fear, that on the ſubject of cotton, the then projected intercourſe with Ireland would interfere with the intereſts of this country, and that conſiderably, from the circumſtance that the price of labour was lower in the one country than the other.—I have not changed my opinion upon that ſubject, and I have to regret that the prejudices of manufacturers, on both ſides the water, have very much tended to cripple the Union in its progreſs: a meaſure which has my moſt hearty wiſh for its ſucceſs, under a perfect perſuaſion that it is calculated, not to ſerve England only, but every branch of the Britiſh empire, and more particularly for the ſalvation of Ireland.—I have long viewed it, and do ſtill view it, as a meaſure calculated to bring us together, and founded upon that moſt clear propoſition, that both countries ſhould have an identity of intereſt; that the advantages of this country ſhould co-operate with the advantages of Ireland, and by which they may produce manufactures much cheaper than they did before. But I am ſorry to ſay that certain prejudices, at which I have already hinted, have, in a great meaſure, ſtood

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in the way of that desirable end. The low price of labour in Ireland, is favourable to many works of the most solid kind, as well as those of genius and taste, and by a judicious disposal of which, the interests of both countries may be materially and most advantageously affected.—Ireland, however, has shewn herself afraid, in some measure, of opening an intercourse of the most liberal kind with this country; and, I fear that apprehension has been augmented by the expression of a gentleman who has long been, and still is, in a high station in Ireland; I mean Mr. Beresford, who I understood to have said, "that a weak neighbour, who is so very poor as to stand in need of protection, should take care of his rich one, lest, under the pretence of assistance, he should take away his little all." This is what I always understood to be an illfounded jealousy with regard to the intentions of this country; and I cannot help thinking that propagating such a distrust, is like a poor man shutting his door and refusing to admit the visit of a rich good neighbour who came with intention to relieve him in the hour of need. Ireland is in a state that is comparatively poor and weak, and England is opulent and strong, both in her government and property. England stands in no

need

need of aſſiſtance to inſure her independence; Ireland does.—I did conceive, on that account, that Ireland would have been very glad to have forwarded an Union with England on circumſtances of pure reciprocity and liberality of ſentiment; but I ſhould be waſting the time of the Committee if I preſſed this topic any further. Ireland has a very valuable manufacture, and has free acceſs to all its advantages on the part of England, and without that indulgence, ſhe could not have that acceſs; an indulgence, give me leave to ſay, our own manufacturers can hardly boaſt of, and which if they had, the trade of Ireland would, in ſome reſpects, be leſs valuable than it is; and for which value they are indebted to England's bounty.—They have a great trade of muſlins, and yet they refuſe that manufacture of ours without a duty of £. 50 per cent. and which would juſtify a protecting duty of £. 10 per cent. I do not complain of this becauſe it operates materially againſt the intereſt of this country; but I do complain on account of there being a want of that good underſtanding which ſtops an intercourſe between the two countries, on free and liberal terms, on account of this unjuſt prohibitory duty; and that the more eſpecially when we were told by the right honourable gentle-

gentleman who brought this ſubject before us, that the intercourſe between the two countries was to be liberal and equitable, whereas the reſtricting clauſes upon ſome of the ſubjects are likely to keep us ſeparate from each other for at leaſt twenty years. I perſuaded myſelf at the onſet of this buſineſs, that the plan would have been ſo carried on that Engliſh capital would ſoon have viſited every corner of Ireland. I promiſed myſelf the pleaſure of ſeeing, that where there is now a hut or a hovel, there would ſoon be a comfortable human habitation. I promiſed myſelf alſo the proſpect of ſeeing, in a little time, that the agents of ſedition ſhould be diſabled from alienating the affections of the people from government, under the cloak of religion. I did conceive, that France would no more entertain any hopes of diſuniting that country than this, from its government; and that the conteſt or ſtruggle between us would ſoon be changed from arms to arts.—Some of theſe things I ſtill hope ſoon to ſee, but not all of them.—Am I then, under this ſtate of things, to vote againſt the Union? Am I to vote againſt it, becauſe I know the cotton trade to be hardly dealt by? Am I ſo diſpleaſed with the regulations of the muſlin trade, that I muſt ſay the meaſure at large ſhall not have

have my ſupport? Sir, the meaſure itſelf is ſo important, that ſmall conſiderations muſt not be allowed to weigh againſt it; yet I do conceive that the meaſure of the Union, even as now propoſed, although giving to both our woollen and cotton by no means what is juſt or equitable, is ſuch that, it is better we ſhould agree to the terms now offered, rather than perſiſt in meaſures that may be fatal to the great meaſure itſelf, and riſk the poſſibility of Ireland becoming a province to France. It is on this ground that I ſupport the meaſure, unfavourable as it is. I do likewiſe hope we ſhall long follow a line of conduct which I look upon as a very proper, though ſome gentlemen think it a very ſimple one—I mean that of proceeding to a conſiderable extent, in ſtate affairs, upon confidence in his Majeſty's miniſters. I know that has been thought extremely wrong by ſome members of this Houſe, but I own it has never yet appeared ſo to me—So far from it, that a ſyſtem of confidence appears to me more rational than that of diſtruſt. In the affairs of private life it is the general guide of our actions: I know not why it ſhould be otherwiſe in the affairs of the public. If a friend of mine ſhould ſhew his attachment to my intereſt, and ſolicitude for my comfort, in the hour

of

of adverſity, when I was abandoned by almoſt every body elſe, ſhould I not be juſtified in continuing to confide in ſuch a perſon? and, would there be any thing extravagant in my ſuffering myſelf to be guided by his opinion? I own there does not appear to me any thing to blame in ſuch conduct. Now, for the application of this doctrine, I do ſay that the preſent adminiſtration are entitled to the favourable confidence of parliament and the public; it ariſes out of their conduct, and this, I think, muſt be apparent, when we conſider the danger to which this nation was at one time expoſed. We are indebted to adminiſtration for the cloſe application with which they examined the ſtate of this country, and the means whereby a timely end was put to the deſigns of our domeſtic enemies. We are indebted to them alſo for the wiſe courſe they purſued to reſtore public credit when it was in danger. We were, at one time, almoſt diſheartened by the deſertion of almoſt all our allies; at that time alſo, adminiſtration ſuſtained the nation in a proper ſtate of dignity, and even raiſed it to a pitch of eminence before unknown in the world. Upon theſe grounds I forbear to dwell on trivial ſacrifices which this meaſure calls on this country to make, and am determined to ſupport this reſolution.

Mr.

Mr. *Wilberforce.* It was rather my wiſh, ſir, after the ample diſcuſſion which this ſubject had undergone by the learned counſel for the petitioners, who delivered one of the moſt able ſpeeches I ever heard at your bar, to have waited until other gentlemen had ſtated what in their minds, was the reſult of the evidence they had heard, in order that I might know where it was defective, and that I might, by ſuch obſervations as might occur to me, endeavour to ſupply that defect; but I own I can do little more than repeat what the learned counſel ſtated in his ſpeech in ſumming up the evidence to the committee. Indeed that ſpeech comprehended every thing belonging to the ſubject ſo entirely, and was ſo ably delivered that I am not ſure I ſhould have ſaid any thing at preſent on the reſolution which is now before you, but that the ſpeech of the honorable gentleman who ſpoke laſt has diſpoſed me to ſay a few words, becauſe ſome things were uttered in that ſpeech, that were never before ſuggeſted on the queſtion of the Union---I ſhould however declare at the commencement of what I have to ſay, that from the conduct of the honorable gentleman who ſpoke laſt, it is manifeſt no man is more ready than he is, to ſupport any meaſure for the public good, at the

the ſame time he will give me leave to ſay that after giving him entire credit for his patriotiſm, he is, on a caſe of this kind, rather a dangerous ally to us. He has indeed, from a profound judgment and the fair exertion of very ſuperior talents riſen to the higheſt degree of opulence and character in this country, ſo that every thing he utters in this houſe juſtly has great weight and conſiderable effect. But it is my buſineſs to addreſs you, ſir, on the behalf of men of another deſcription, but on whoſe ſtate and condition this country has a great ſtake; in whoſe welfare the whole of the community in which we live, is deeply intereſted; whoſe teſtimony, although not ſo affluent as the honorable gentleman, is entitled to the attention of this committee; and who, although not conſpicuous characters in ſociety, are nevertheleſs reſpectable for the diligence, patience, induſtry, and labour, by which they have ſupported themſelves and families, and ſuſtained the very great, though unavoidable burthens impoſed upon them in order to ſupport the ſtate. Theſe burthens they have ſupported, not only without a murmur, but with a chearfulneſs which does honour to their character, and entitles them to the protection of this Houſe, as well as the reſpect of the whole country. I am ſure the honourable gentleman, with that

candour,

candour, of which no man has a larger ſhare, will make this diſtinction; that although theſe Reſolutions may deeply affect a trade, in which he is deeply intereſted, and therefore it is highly creditable in him to forbear complaining, becauſe he may think the good to be procured to the public will much outweigh the evil:—yet, that to theſe poor, honeſt, and laborious perſons, of whom I am now ſpeaking, the caſe is otherwiſe. Their all is at ſtake; every thing that relates to themſelves and their families is put to the utmoſt hazard by the Reſolution which is now before the Committee; and the point as it affects them, ſtands between comfort and abſolute ruin; and which of theſe ſhall be their lot, depends upon the vote which this Committee ſhall come to this night.

The honorable member oppoſite to me, ſeems to miſtake the ſtage of our proceeding. We ſhould, unleſs we knew otherwiſe, have conceived from the manner in which he ſpoke upon the ſubject, have ſuppoſed that the Speaker was now in the chair, and that the Houſe was deliberating in the laſt ſtage, which the forms of proceeding allow to it;—that the queſtion was, whether we ſhould agree or diſagree to the proceedings of the Committee?—and that the matter had now, for the laſt time, come

come before us in a maſs. But we know the caſe is otherwiſe, that we are ſtill in a Committee, in which any Reſolution that is not yet voted, may be modified as to us ſhall ſeem meet; nor can I ſuppoſe that my right honourable friend [Mr. Pitt] would wiſh to bring forward any propoſition, without allowing time ſufficient for any alteration, which may appear, not indeed on light, but on weighty and important occaſion, to require, and which, of courſe, ſhould be diſpoſed of only after a fair and deliberate conſideration. Such alteration may be made without deſtruction to the principle on which the Union is not only profeſſed, but on which we all feel it to be founded; and therefore, if I propoſe to alter the article which is now before us, I by no means declare myſelf hoſtile to the Union altogether; and if the Committee would pardon the alluſion to ſo unimportant a ſubject, I would ſay, that I have ſpoken leſs upon the general meaſure of the Union than commonly falls to my ſhare in the ordinary diſcuſſion of public affairs in this Houſe. The meaſure which I have to propoſe, has no tendency to affect the general queſtion of Union; all the other parts of it are different from this. All the material benefits of the Union would remain, although my propoſition ſhould be

adopted. What I ſhall propoſe would not affect them. It would be troubling the Committee, and waſting my own ſtrength unneceſſarily, to preſs this point. Every gentleman in this Houſe, is entitled to credit in the firſt inſtance, for his ſtatement of the tendency of any thing he is about to propoſe; nor is there any inconvenience in ſo doing, for the Houſe muſt always judge for itſelf before it adopts any meaſure, and then any little occaſional inaccuracy of ſtatement, or ſudden miſconception of a matter, which create ſome difference of opinions between us, is buried for ever. I ſay this, becauſe otherwiſe, part of what the honourable gentleman ſaid, would convey an idea that I muſt either be againſt the Union, or vote for the Reſolutions altogether, and that they are now ſo circumſtanced, that they muſt be either adopted or rejected altogether. This I ſay, becauſe he ſtated ſome reaſons for thinking ſome of the Reſolutions in themſelves improper, but that he would not propoſe any alteration in them, becauſe, he ſeemed to think that might have a bad effect on the Iriſh Parliament, and might tend to deſtroy the Union. I have been led to ſay thus much from what was ſtated by the honourable member who has juſt ſpoken, and I ſhall now recur to what I before hinted at;

and

and although the matter itſelf ſeems to lie within a narrow compaſs, yet, could I impart to the Committee the feelings I have upon this occaſion, they would, I am perſuaded, excuſe me, if I read to them a great part of the evidence which was given at your bar; but I truſt every gentleman in this Committee has read it with attention: and I am certain, that when I touch on ſome particular parts of the evidence, the feelings of the Committee will go along with me, in a great meaſure; and where they do not, I hope that thoſe parts will be ſtated wherein we may happen to differ. But before I proceed to that, I ſhould ſay a word or two on what was ſtated juſt now by the honourable member, who has juſt preceded me in this debate. I cannot help thinking, that upon this ſubject of the Union, there ſeems to be creeping into the Houſe, as it were, a diſpoſition to think that it would be more liberal for us not to ſtand much upon that which conſtitutes our own intereſt or the intereſt of our conſtituents, but that we ought to conſider the Union as a grand important meaſure, in the munificence and magnitude of which our own intereſts ought to be buried, or that the Union is a ſplendid object, in the view of which we ſhould paſs by, as unworthy of notice, any of the perſonal intereſts

of our conſtituents. To this way of conſidering the ſubject in any deliberative aſſembly, and above all in an aſſembly of the repreſentatives of the people, I object; for beſides the tendency it has to remind us of a maxim, which I am afraid is more remarkable for its truth than its urbanity, and was uttered by a man who is much celebrated for his acuteneſs and wit, [Dean Swift] "That there is nothing which men uſually bear with more philoſophical patience than the misfortunes of others;"—or that we may be conſidered like "generous church-wardens;" that is to ſay, liberal at the expence of others.—It is contrary to that which appears to me to be the very genius of repreſentation, and muſt render us obnoxious to the ſatire of thoſe who ſeek every where, and in every thing, an excuſe or pretext for telling the people of England, that the idea of repreſentation in Parliament, in its preſent practical effect, is a ſubject fit for ridicule.—I ſay, we ſhall be expoſed to this ſort of diſtorted figure of our proceedings, if, under any idea of magnificence, we ſhould paſs reſolutions which ſhall afterwards be felt to have ſacrificed the real and ſolid intereſts of a very great part of our conſtituents. I ſay, it is a principle interwoven into the policy of this country,

country, its laws, its very conſtitution are founded on it; and it makes part of the texture as it were of our whole ſyſtem, that every individual in the community ſhall be conſidered as the guardian of his own rights and privileges; the protector and governor of his own property; and that he ſhall always, and every where, be allowed to aſſert and vindicate his title with effect. Therefore, when gentlemen tell me I ſhould act with liberality in a caſe like this, I muſt tell them, they do not underſtand the principle on which our conſtitution is founded, nor the rights it protects, nor the liberty it nouriſhes, unleſs they allow their conſtituents leave to aſſert what they know, to expreſs what they feel, and give them credit for underſtanding at leaſt ſomething of the trade by which they live, and for feeling ſomething upon apprehenſion of the loſs of every thing that is moſt dear to them in the ſociety in which they live. I thought it neceſſary to ſay this, after what fell from an honourable member, to whom I have already ſo frequently alluded, and who has, by his ſpeech to-night, given earneſt of his readineſs to forego great perſonal intereſt of his own, for what he ſays are, and no doubt conceives to be, the general intereſts of his country,—But in calling your attention to this

matter, I by no means conceive I am calling your attention to the partial intereſt of any body of men; but the ground on which I am aſking your attention is, that thoſe for whom I claim it, have an intereſt that is, as it were, no leſs extenſive than the intereſt of the whole country.—I ſay it is ſo, from the nature of that intereſt; but in the view I have of it, it is not their intereſt merely, but the intereſt of the whole kingdom that is involved in the Reſolution which is now before you. I ſay, it is for the general benefit of the empire at large, as well as for the benefit of thoſe whom I have the honour of repreſenting; nay, it is for the benefit of Ireland herſelf, that the meaſure which I am about to propoſe ſhould be adopted: at leaſt, that is the view I have of the ſubject.

I think conſiderable miſtakes have been made concerning theſe propoſitions, at leaſt out of this houſe. Many perſons think this is a queſtion of regulation merely; others think it is a queſtion of repeal only of ſome old, and perhaps they may think, odious prohibition. Some of theſe are indeed points which regulate, and ſome which repeal prohibitions; but they are prohibitions that are not odious but ſalutary, and to a given extent, indiſpenſable towards the well-being of the community in which we live. In the firſt place, what is the true ſtate of the

caſe?

caſe? what will be the real ſituation of things in regard to the condition of the Britiſh Empire if the reſolutions paſs as they ſtand now? As the law now ſtands, woollen yarn may be imported from Ireland into this country, but cannot be imported into Ireland from this country. This is a fundamental article of national policy, to work the raw material of wool at home, and not to allow ſuch raw material to go abroad. But it is not merely ſending wool to Ireland; it is alſo the protecting duty againſt our woollen goods going to Ireland, independant of the loſs of the raw material, that I have to complain of: One of two principles ought at leaſt to be obſerved,—Ireland ſhould at leaſt ſay this to us, If you give us your raw material, we will wave our protecting duty; if we are to be conſidered as one family, and but the inhabitants of one kingdom, whoſe intereſts are the ſame, why ſhould Ireland have a protecting duty againſt the importation of the manufacture of Yorkſhire any more than Derbyſhire has?—On the other ſide they ſay, What better ſhall we be with your wool, without the means to work it up, which they ſay is, in other words, an encouragement to work it up, and which again they ſay is the protecting duty; they ſay that, "unleſs you

allow us the protecting duty as well as the wool, you do us no good." Now, upon the ſubject which is before us, I have thought a great deal, and I have never been able to change the impreſſion which was made by it upon my mind. I have converſed with ſeveral intelligent people out of this houſe upon it, and there is not one man to whom I have ſtated it, that did not at once fall in preciſely to my opinion, and continue ſo upon reflection; and who did not ſay, that the ſubject of the exportation of wool, and the protecting duty, as propoſed at preſent, is perfectly unfair. I ſay it is ſo unfair, that it is impoſſible to defend it. You ſhould have ſaid: "Let each of the two countries keep its own raw material, or at leaſt, if the raw material be allowed to go to Ireland, let the protecting duty be taken away; to poſſeſs both is enormous unfairneſs"—and here let me do juſtice to the ſentiments of my own conſtituents; they would not deſire that the protecting duty ſhould be taken away unleſs it was propoſed that Engliſh wool ſhould be ſent to Ireland; were that duty taken away, they would be able to overwhelm Ireland, but they deſire no ſuch thing; they aſk only, that if the protecting duty is to continue, Ireland ſhall not be ſupplied with our raw ma-

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terial to work up with. This I ſay muſt appear to the committee abſolutely unjuſt, contrary to the opinion of every man I ever converſed with; I alledge it to be, and contrary it certainly is, alſo, to all the common rules of equity, juſtice, and fair-dealing. However, I ſhould not trouble the houſe much at length upon this ſubject, if this were merely ſpeculative injuſtice or theoretical inequality; but it is mixt with and compounded of, practical inconvenience and enormous loſs, ſuch as are likely to be followed by the utter ruin of thoſe on whom it operates;—and I would ſay, that if we are once ſatisfied, that the practical effect of a meaſure is to work enormous injuſtice, it is then fair and perfectly reaſonable to draw every argument againſt the falſe principle on which it is founded; becauſe the principle, which without practical proof might perhaps be deemed theory, becomes demonſtration when ſanctioned by practice; the principle is then abſolute and perfect, and the practical effects of it are to be deemed illuſtrations. So a principle which is a bad one in theory, may be ſaid not to be ſo in practice; but if we find the practical effect of the principle to be bad, we may ſafely pronounce the principle itſelf to be bad alſo; and againſt ſuch a principle

a principle, ſo proved to be bad, it is fair to argue even theoretically. And now I proceed to lay down a propoſition; it is this: "That "the petitioners againſt the exportation of wool "have made out in evidence, that the kingdom "of Great Britain now works all the wool "which it produces, and that that which goes "to Ireland, will diminiſh the manufacture of "this country." That is the propoſition which I ſtate, and on which we differ: I ſay it is proved by the evidence given at your bar, that we now work all the wool which is produced in this country, and that if any goes to Ireland, it will leſſen the manufacture of this country.—If that be ſo, and I ſay it is inconteſtably proved, it becomes this committee to conſider for what reaſon it is that they will give away this moſt valuable raw material. I ſay it is worth while for the committee to conſider whether this will be much for the intereſt of thoſe who are to receive it: I conceive, ſpeaking in a comprehenſive ſenſe, that the very contrary is the truth, and therefore it is on more grounds than one that I ſay this meaſure is moſt unwiſe. I have heard the opinion of Doctor Adam Smith alluded to upon this ſubject. That great authority undoubtedly ſtates in ſubſtance, on

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the ſyſtem of the wool law, "that ſuffering the raw material to go away, and induce men againſt their prejudices to turn their capital on induſtry, by any artificial mode, when it is capable of giving all an equal chance of the raw material on the one hand, and of working it up on the other, on fair and equitable terms, would be proper:" but it ſeems to me alſo, that if it be true that we now work up all the wool which this country can produce; it muſt then follow, that whatever Ireland can get from us, we uſe at leaſt in an equal degree, and therefore it would be well for us to conſider, even with a view only to the ultimate welfare of Ireland herſelf, whether we ſhould thus try to enrich her at our own expence, and take away from ourſelves certain advantages which we now enjoy, without being at all certain that we ſhall communicate to her any real advantage whatever. I conceive this to be a point on which it is proper for me to refer to the evidence; I ſhall however, to ſave time, refer only to two or three parts of it, and then thoſe who have heard or read it, will themſelves recollect or refer to the reſt. Mr. Huſler, whoſe father was in buſineſs for ſixty years, himſelf ſixteen, tells you, that in the year 1793, wool

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fell from 7l. to 5l. from which time it has been gradually rising, until it has at last arrived at the price of 11l. 10s.—But it may not be improper that I should endeavour, as well as I am able, to anticipate the objections which are likely to be made to my sentiments on this subject: it has been stated, and probably will be stated again, that wool, like other articles of trade, will accommodate itself to the demand. This, as a general proposition, as to the articles of trade, is true, but like almost every other general proposition, it is subject to a multitude of qualifications and exceptions; and I say that from the nature of the case, this proposition, when applied to wool, becomes a mistaken proposition: indeed we are likely to be greatly misled by almost any propositions, whenever we attempt to apply them universally, and in none more so than upon the article in question, for wool is not to be considered merely as a raw material, but also as an appendage to other articles, and must be combined with them, and make a compound consideration. It is not like your fisheries or your corn, in which that article may be considered in a detached state, but must be blended with other considerations: thus for instance, when we consider wool we must consider

ſider it in the encouragement to be given to its growth, as attached to the animal that produces it; ſo that if the farmer conceives it more to his intereſt to protect the fleſh than the wool, you have no good ſecurity for the preſervation of wool, and your propoſition, "that an increaſe of the demand will produce an increaſe of ſupply," will fail, and will never begin to operate until the wool becomes an article of primary conſideration, which at preſent is not the caſe, the wool, in compariſon with the carcaſe of the animal not being above one to ſeven perhaps. For upon inquiry I find, that in the part of the country in which I live, the average price of the wool was ſome time ago taken at from 5l. to 6l. the pack. The carcaſe of the animal will weigh from 18 to 20 ſtone: now upon conſidering the price of the wool, even in its advanced ſtate, it will appear to offer an encouragement to its cultivation but in a very ſlight degree, in compariſon with that of the fleſh of the animal, for although the advancement upon wool be from 3l. to 4l. per pack, yet this is next to nothing to the inducement of turning into profit the carcaſe of the animal:—The probability then is, that although indeed the ſheep will be well fed, yet you will not have more

wool

wool, becauſe the butcher will be induced to ſlaughter it at a given age, which will anſwer his purpoſe better than to keep it for the ſake of the produce of the wool. I only mention this in paſſing, to ſhew that wool is not the primary article, but that it is connected with another article which determines it, and therefore that the general principle, "That an advance in the price of an article will tend to encourage its production," is inapplicable to the ſubject of wool; or in other words, "That an increaſed demand conduces to an increaſed ſupply." We all ſee its inapplicability to the article in queſtion; but not to rely on general reaſoning, we have this plain fact before us, that the price of wool has in fact been increaſing greatly within theſe few years; what is the reaſon for this?—If the ſupply could in general keep pace with the demand, we ſhould ſee that the deficiency would only be felt for a week or two, or perhaps a month, but that afterwards we ſhould have plenty of wool as the demand increaſed; but all the witneſſes prove the reverſe of this ſuppoſition, for they all declare there never was ſo great a deficiency in the ſupply of the article of wool as at the preſent moment. Many of them have gone round the country,

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endeavouring in vain to get it: others have heard from their correſpondents there is none to be got: others again have been obliged to give up their foreign orders for want of wool; one perſon, who had an order for 300 packs, could, after all his diligence to execute it, obtain only 70.—Now I would aſk, do not theſe facts contradict and entirely overturn their application of the principle, that increaſed demand will produce an increaſed ſupply; for ſuch is the ſtatement of the evidence at your bar. However it may poſſibly be ſtated, and I conceive from ſome queſtions I heard put, it will be aſked, how then do you account for the great increaſe of the manufacture of the article of cloth of Yorkſhire? which by looking at the exports you will find has taken place, and this too at the very time when your witneſſes have been ſaying that the wool was ſcarce, which we deny. How can you account for this, unleſs the quantity of wool has been enlarged? This occurred to me as a difficulty when I examined into the evidence; I wanted information on it, and I have obtained it; I will ſtate my reaſons for it preſently. The great conſideration to which I wiſh to call the attention of the committee is this: There was, ſome years ago, an application

application made to parliament by a part of the country in which the honourable gentleman who ſpoke laſt is conſiderably connected; it was for permiſſion to export wool, becauſe there was at that time, three or four years produce of the commodity on hand, and the price was only from three to five pounds per pack. Now upon this ſubject I wiſh to call the attention of the committee to a part of the printed copy of the evidence which they will find in page 8:—The witneſs was aſked as to the quantity of wool on hand in the year 1784, over and above the produce of the year? to which the witneſs anſwers, "I have heard it ſtated as being nearly three years growth of combing wool."—I will now ſtate at once to the committee what I conceive to be the fact: it is this; ever ſince that period the manufactures have been increaſing, not at all in conſequence of the product of each year, but gaining on the ſtock in hand each year more than at any former period. If I am right in my poſition, at that period there were three or four years ſtock in hand; and it appears there never was any time in which the quantity actually in hand, was ſo low as it is at preſent; for in point of fact, it has of late been uſed in a ſtate in which it is leſs fit than it ought to be for the purpoſes of manufacture; the manufacturers have not only been uſing all the

the accumulation of the paſt, but by taking wool before the period at which it is fit for uſe, they may be ſaid to have been anticipating the future; and if the committee will look into the matter, they will ſee that upon the quantity of cloth which was laſt year returned at Pomfret ſeſſions, as milled it appears almoſt double to what, a good many years ago, uſed to appear; and yet the quantity of wool this year is ſo low, that there is indeed not ſufficient to work with. Now, taking the produce to be 600,000 packs, which was a calculation made without any view of anſwering the purpoſe for which I now uſe it, and indeed without any proſpect of its being applicable to that purpoſe, and made by a man of as much ſagacity, knowledge, and experience on this ſubject, as any that ever lived in this world, (Mr. Huſtler the elder,) and taking it for truth alſo, that there was formerly a great accumulation of wool, but that it is now all worked up into manufacture, it appears that the increaſe of manufactured goods has not ariſen from an increaſe in the product of the raw material, but from this accumulation.

Now, Sir, I do underſtand from other gentlemen, perfectly unconnected with this gentleman, there was a very large iſſue of paper from the country banks, which gave very great facility to thoſe who purchaſed wool, ſo that large

portions of wool were purchaſed; and although the order for cloth for the French army was the cauſe of purchaſing a great quantity of wool in 1792, yet it was not ſufficient to conſume the produce of one year: it was only for two months, and it was ſupplied by two houſes who purchaſed the one againſt the other, but this was not ſo great as to affect the produce of the year:—and if any doubt remained upon that ſubject, it would not be difficult to produce the accounts of theſe very gentlemen, if the committee ſhould think proper to refer to them.

But there is another point which caſts much light on the evidence of Mr. Huſtler, and I think it is partly due to him that I ſhould ſtate it, which is, that before he gave in the correction to his evidence, the ſubſtance of it was included in what he ſaid, as it appears in the 8th page of the printed copy of his examination, in anſwer to the queſtion:—"Since what year has there ceaſed to be any ſtock in hand, over and above the produce of the year?"—"The quantity has gradually decreaſed ſince 1784.—In 1792, it was bought up from the farmers nearly as much as at preſent, but not conſumed." Now I beg leave to obſerve, that this anſwer comprehends in it the correction of this gentleman's evidence the ſecond day.—Another perſon engaged in the buſineſs of purchaſing wool, ſtates the ſame thing, as

appears

appears in the printed evidence, page 18. Mr. Lumb, of Wakefield, to the queſtion, "Do you know whether at any period, during the laſt ten years, there has been a great quantity on hand, either with the ſtaplers or the growers? anſwers—"There was a good ſtock in the ſpring of 1793, but none ſince." Now I ſay, if any thing can confirm the evidence of the former witneſs, Mr. Huſtler, it is that which I have juſt ſtated. But there is another proof which is in my power to afford to the committee; and I know no good reaſon why it ſhould not be laid on your table. It relates to wool bought by Mr. Love in the year 1792, and by which it appears what the price of wool was, of the growth of Cambridge, Norfolk, and Suffolk, by which it appears manifeſtly, that the price of wool in the year 1792, which is the only year that has been attempted to be compared with the preſent, roſe in conſequence of ſpeculation in that article. I ſhould be glad to ſubmit this account of the price of wool to any gentleman who would wiſh to make uſe of it, for it is material, and very uſeful evidence on the inveſtigation of this buſineſs. I ſay, it is now manifeſt that all the arguments of a real ſcarcity in the year 1792 are done away, and therefore I may recur to the propoſition I laid down early in my addreſs to you, that ever ſince

the year 1784, the manufacture of woollen goods has been growing, and encroaching on the ſtock of wool in hand, which ought to be kept for the uſe of the manufacture of this country; and that "now the kingdom of Great Britain works all the wool which it produces, and that wool which goes to Ireland will diminiſh the manufacture of this country."

Another ſubject of conſideration is that of Spaniſh wool imported into this country, and which has been continually increaſing; and upon this I alſo ſay, nothing appears to controvert my propoſition, but much in ſupport of it; and without conſidering this point attentively alſo, it will be impoſſible for the committee, or the houſe afterwards, to determine juſtly. It is not from an earlier period than the year 1791 that we have an account of the importation of Spaniſh wool into this country: it would have been deſirable that we ſhould have it from the year 1784, in order that we might compare the importation under different circumſtances; for it uſually happens, that when importation is great in one year, it is leſs in the next: laſt year it was greater than it was formerly; but from private information, on which I can venture to rely, I have been able to obtain an account of the quantity of Spaniſh wool imported into this country, by which it appears that the

quantity

quantity has increaſed very much indeed, which is only another fact in ſupport of my propoſition, "That the manufactory of Great Britain is now more than equal to its wool," and therefore "That none of that wool can be exported without manifeſt injury to that manufacture." I do not know that it is neceſſary for me to add any thing more to this part of the argument; and I ſay this the rather, becauſe I do not know what objections can be urged againſt it: and if any are made, I truſt that other gentlemen will anſwer them. But while I am on this ſubject, I will take notice of a point which may be urged. Perhaps ſome gentlemen will ſay, that the idea of our looſing the advantages we now enjoy from our woollen manufactory, is nothing but an ill-founded jealouſy. That my apprehenſion of Ireland running away with any of our manufacture is merely chimerical. To which I would anſwer in the firſt place, that an arrangement that is in itſelf unjuſt, and which is founded on a falſe principle, ought not, upon ſpeculative ideas that it will produce no practical miſchiefs, to be countenanced in the Houſe of Commons, under any pretence; and ſtill leſs if a great number of men whoſe characters are pure, whoſe intelligence is of the firſt rate, and whoſe purſuits are of the firſt utility to the opulence of the country in which they live, are decidedly

againſt it, as injurious to their intereſt.—But I ſhould wiſh to cloſe upon this argument, and ſee where the truth ſtands, and how it bears.—I would aſk what has given to our manufactures of woollen goods the ſuperiority they have, eſpecially to that part of the kingdom to which I have frequently alluded?—It is not owing ſolely to the induſtry of the inhabitants of that country, of which, however, no people upon earth, I believe, have a larger ſhare; nor is it wholly owing to their ſkill, in which no body of men, I believe, ever could excel them; it is not wholly owing to the valuable machinery which they uſe, an invention which, I believe, was never ſurpaſſed by any effort of human contrivance; but it is owing to all theſe things combined together, with the energy of the Engliſh character acting under the protecting genius of the Engliſh conſtitution, under the ſalutary proviſions of a Legiſlature, whoſe wiſdom has, with a few interruptions, ſecured to us, from age to age, the ſole uſe of the raw materials, of which our manufactures are compoſed, and that of wool moſt emphatically. Look to Ireland, and there you will ſee they have not been able to equal us in the article of woollen goods. Why ſo?—Becauſe they have not had the ſame quantity of wool of their own to work with as we have. But the queſtion is not merely whether

wool

wool ſhall be imported into Ireland or not; it is, whether France ſhall work manufactures with our wool. That would partly be the effect of allowing this importation of wool to Ireland: at leaſt it is ſo apprehended. Far be it from me to look with jealouſy on the proſperity of Ireland; no man wiſhes to her more good fortune than I do, but I do not ſee why I ſhould conſent to impoveriſh this country in order to enrich Ireland. In point of fact, the wollen manufacture of Ireland has received indeed encouragement, and countenance, and aſſiſtance in Ireland; whereas ours has grown up as the natural production of our ſoil: and all that we aſk now is, that you ſhould not injure that ſoil. We aſk no bounty, or any ſort of encouragement, but that you ſhould not at once put an end to our trade, by taking away the materials of which it is compoſed, and deliver it over at once to another country. But one of the moſt important arguments that weigh on my mind is this:— Notwithſtanding the Iriſh protecting duty, we do export and ſend thither 600,000l. worth a year of cloth; and this ſhews that the manufactures of this country are able to make their way under conſiderable diſadvantages; but the exportation of the raw material will be moſt dangerouſly injurious to this part of the trade of this country, and highly ſo to thoſe for whoſe

intereſt I am now contending: for while we have our own wool to ourſelves, we can ſtand up againſt the Iriſh protecting duty, but when the raw material is taken away from us, and given to Ireland, then the Iriſh protecting duty will begin to operate; and if you adopt the reſolution which is now before you, the truth of what I am now ſaying will be manifeſt, when it is too late to prevent the miſchief.

I have now, ſir, anſwered, as well as I was able, the principal objections offered, or likely to be offered againſt my ſtatement, that thoſe for whom I am arguing, will be materially affected by the meaſure which is now before you.—That manufacturers have ſometimes entertained groundleſs fears and exaggerated apprehenſions, I admit; but that is no reaſon why this committee ſhould take a ſtep which may ruin ſo large a branch of our manufacture, eſpecially when they know that when once the ſtep is taken, there can be no means of retrieving our condition. This is a point on which parliament ſhould be extremely cautious, ſeeing in what dangers we may be involved.

I have ſtated reaſons for believing that the Iriſh will derive advantages over us, if this article ſhould take place; but there are other points ſo obtruſive as to preſs upon the mind of every man who examines this ſubject with the leaſt

leaſt attention: in the firſt place, the article of wool is dearer at preſent in Ireland than it is in England; this is ſtated by a witneſs who is a great dealer in wool, and this is corroborated by a man of conſiderable talents and celebrity, who is no friend to the ſide of the argument which I am now taking, and therefore I cannot take teſtimony that is leſs liable to objection. The gentleman I allude to is Mr. Arthur Young, and he ſays the price of wool is higher in Ireland than it is in England. Some years ago the manufacturers migrated from the Weſt of England to Yorkſhire, happily I hope for themſelves and for the part of the country into which they came; but this aroſe out of the advantage which was derived from the uſe of machinery, for in various inſtances machinery not only abridges labour, but alſo ſupplies the place of ſkill. By it, women and children can now perform that, which before its uſe, required great ſkill of men; which reminds me of what I heard ſtated ſome time ago by an honourable friend of mine, that a perſon in this town had contrived a machine, which by mere dint of brute force would produce the effect of that which before required the talents of ſkilful men to execute.

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In the next place what are we to ſay to the ſubject of taxes,—will not taxes preſs more hardly on the people of this country than on thoſe of Ireland?—This is a topic on which it is painful for me to ſpeak, but the cauſe of truth requires it:—So long as men ſhall enjoy the protection of the legiſlature, they will not grudge what they are to pay to ſupport the ſtate under which they live, and indeed many individuals have made many perſonal ſacrifices for the public good; none are more forward in that reſpect than thoſe for whom I am now contending. I believe the tax on income was ſuggeſted at a public meeting of my conſtituents, there being in that part of the world, many who were not ſatisfied that they ſhould enjoy all their wealth, without being made to bear a proportionable part of the publick burthens. But will they be induced to make any more ſuch offers? will they be able to pay what they are now aſſeſſed, if you take away from them the raw material by which they have made up their manufactures, and which was the life and ſpirit of their trade? they connot do ſo if you ſeal up the article by which they live, and expoſe them to the danger of being underſold in the market, and therefore ruined. Indeed I think

you

you ought to be very ſure you will not injure this induſtrious and valuable claſs of men before you paſs this irrevocable decree.

I cannot help here taking notice of another ſubject; it is the increaſe of the poor rates. In Ireland they pay no poor rates: let theſe two things be conſidered together. Now thoſe who complain of this reſolution, pay more towards the taxes of the ſtate, as they have leſs to pay of the poor rates; but if you take away the ground work on which they roſe into importance in the ſtate, which is wool, you will reduce many of them into a condition to take from, inſtead of contributing to, the poor rates: in ſuch a ſituation, it will be natural for them to look to that part of the world where they will not have the ſame burthen to bear, and becauſe Ireland will become that place, for in fact there is no poor rate whatever there; they will be led to go thence, to the inexpreſſible loſs of this country. I do not know it is neceſſary for me to ſtate all the peculiar advantages of Ireland, in carrying on the woollen manufactory: ſurely it is not neceſſary to ſay more upon that ſubject than that you are now going to give to Ireland other advantages to which they have no natural claim. Let me now aſk for what end this is to be done? what particular object have you to anſwer by this alteration of the law of your country?

country?—I appeal to the honourable gentleman oppoſite to me, who ſpoke laſt, what is the great change and the great advantage to be expected by the union?—I would aſk him, whether the grand object of it is not, that the two legiſlatures ſhould be united in one incorporated union?—That they ſhall be ſo blended together, that there ſhall thenceforward never ariſe any difference of ſentiment, as we have unhappily ſeen, between the two great councils of the nation; this is the great object of the union, and a glorious one it is; but is there any man who will ſay that the importation of wool has any thing to do with that idea?—Laſt year it was not included in the contemplation of either party, at leaſt it is ſo reported in the ſpeech of Mr. Foſter, the ſpeaker of the Iriſh houſe of commons. It was not intended in the arrangement of 1785, although every thing that was fit for her to enjoy was then ſuppoſed to be agreed to: it was not formerly, at any time, thought fit that this ſhould be one of the number of the advantages which Ireland ſhould enjoy: and here, I think, I have a right to complain of the injury which is likely to be done to the manufactory of this country. It is admitted that it will have that effect, and ſtated in almoſt theſe words, by Lord Caſtlereagh, in his addreſs to the aſſembly of which he is a member;

member; it was an addreſs to the Iriſh legiſlature, not intended for us, but we have a right to look at the driſt of it, now it is before us: he extols the union, and ſays, that formerly there was a jealouſy of manufacturers of Great Britain, which prevented Ireland from having the wool of Great Britain, but he ſays now thoſe jealouſies are overcome, and the Iriſh are to have the wool, upon the advantages of which, he expatiates very ably. Some gentlemen have ſaid that no jealouſy was entertained: I do not know from what authority that aſſertion comes, but this I know, I never gave any ſuch opinion, nor have I ever heard any of my conſtituents, who are moſt materially intereſted in the matter, give any ſuch opinion; I ſay I have ſome reaſon to complain that this is treated as no diſadvantage to Great Britain; when Lord Caſtlereagh plainly implies by his ſpeech, that he felt the Engliſh manufacturers ought to be jealous: he ſays, however, that ſuch jealouſy is now at an end; and therefore Lord Caſtlereagh, upon his own principle, ſince that jealouſy has appeared, ought to deſiſt from this meaſure altogether. After all, I really do not ſee any real and permanent advantage, conſidered as a member of one great empire, which Ireland will have, at leaſt ſhe can have none but that which we ſhall looſe, for we now work up all the

wool

wool we produce, conſequently Ireland can have nothing by the importation of our wool, but what is loſt to our manufacture. Here then let me aſk, are all the channels of national induſtry filled up and choaked, all the ſubjects of national favour ſo diſpoſed of, that we cannot benefit Ireland but by ſomething that ſhall be an injury to ourſelves? is it neceſſary for you to try to help the Iriſh manufactories by ruining a conſiderable part of your own?—I cannot help thinking that Ireland would not ſtand on this, but would endeavour to find out other channels for her capital, if you were not to tempt her with this offer, eſpecially when ſhe came to learn, as the truth will turn out to be, that this meaſure will injure you in a much greater degree than it can poſſibly benefit her. What the particular or really permanent advantage is to be to Ireland from this meaſure, I really cannot anticipate: I cannot ſay that after all Ireland will have a ſingle man more employed, or a ſingle guinea more capital than ſhe would have without this meaſure.

Will it be ſaid, that after this Union Ireland will be made, as it were, part of the ſame kingdom, and that after the Union, Ireland ſhould be conſidered as a Britiſh county?—I am ſure this will not be inſiſted upon, or if it is ſtated, it will be confounding things that are in themſelves

themſelves very diſtinct; many points of an hundred thouſand times more importance to Ireland than this are obſerved, by which the two countries are, for the period of twenty years, at the end of which they are all to ceaſe, to be kept not only diſtinct, but, as it were, aſunder. This was ſo ably ſtated by the learned counſel at your bar, that if I were ſure that every gentleman who now hears me, heard him, I do not know that I ſhould take notice of it at all, for I can have no hope of doing any better than to repeat his obſervations, in worſe language and inferior delivery.—What are your protecting duties? Do they not, from their very name, imply a difference between the two countries? Do not the circumſtances of difference in the taxes imply a great difference alſo in the two nations? Now ſee what effect this conſideration muſt have? Conſider the circumſtance of one hundred members ſitting in this houſe, who do not ſubject either themſelves or their conſtituents to the burthens and regulations to which the people of this country muſt ſubmit; I do not mention it invidiouſly, I know that while they are conſcious they are protected, they will ſubmit to burthens and regulations, and ſubmit chearfully to them. But is not this a great difference? moſt undoubtedly it is, and it ariſes from the different

ability

ability of the two countries: but if this difference muſt exiſt in ſo many ſtriking inſtances, why do you aim at abſtract theoretical perfection in this ſingle inſtance, in this one article, which, if it muſt be obſerved, will be productive of the ruin of a multitude of as good ſubjects as any in his Majeſty's dominions. This article of wool, it ſhould be obſerved, produces nineteen or twenty millions ſterling a year; is not that of importance enough to call for your cautious attention at leaſt; if other articles are governed by practical regulations, why ſhould not this be ſo? I aſk nothing but that you ſhould not break the principle of the Union, which is practical uſe and expediency, to the detriment of the wool trade. I only aſk for an adherence to the plain, common, ordinary rule and principle of juſtice and equity, which are, that you ſhould not direct the people of this country to give up their raw material, and allow a continuance of the Iriſh protecting duty both together.

There are two or three other topics to which I muſt allude, and call your attention. I am not able to expreſs how much I feel, and I am ſure the committee muſt feel, for the intereſt of thoſe for whom I am contending; ſo that I am aware the committee will not think their time loſt, while they attend to what I ſhall further,

further, as briefly as I can, submit to their consideration.

The next thing to which I would call the attention of the Committee, relates to a compact which took place between the two countries, concerning the linen and the woollen manufactories.—I should call the attention of the Committee to the transactions of Parliament at that time.—In the time of king William the Third, a very narrow policy, which no man would condemn more than I would myself, if I were sure it could safely be avoided, prevailed.—But this was part of the conduct of those great men of that day, who saved this country at the time of the Revolution. The state of Ireland was such, at that time, that it was thought necessary to treat it as a conquered country.—However, at that period, it appears there were several messages from the Throne to the Houses of Parliament, both in this country and in Ireland, concerning the linen and the woollen manufactory, and it was stated, at that time, that the two kingdoms should follow each its own proper bent; that is to say, that we should cultivate the woollen and Ireland the linen. The language of this country to Ireland at that was, "Give us the woollen and do you take the linen." Now I would read part of the Address of the Houses of Parliament to

the Throne, if that were neceſſary, but it may be read hereafter, if any gentleman ſhould wiſh to hear it. I ſhall only obſerve that in conſequence of this, certain regulations followed, which tended not to protect merely the woollen manufactory of this country, for that was out of the queſtion, but to keep back the woollen manufacture of Ireland, while they encouraged the manufacture of linen there. There was, amongſt other regulations of a diſcouraging nature, impoſed, twenty ſhillings a yard on the imported woollen cloth of Ireland, which was afterwards repealed; but there was another regulation, that Ireland ſhould not import wool in raw material to any country but this.—So much for the policy of thoſe days, which I ſtate only to ſhew the feeling which this country had for its woollen manufacture. To come to our own times, I would aſk whether this country has not been extremely ſolicitous to protect the linen trade of Ireland, and to encourage it? and whether it does not moſt handſomely contribute to that end? We have now a duty of £33. per cent. on linen imported from Germany.—You will find this ſtated by my Lord Aukland, who ſays, that this operating as a prohibition of linen from Germany for the purpoſe of giving preference to Iriſh linen, coſts you £700,000 a year; and Lord Caſtlereagh

ſtates it at a million, that is, in other words, you pay ſo much more for linen than you had need to do, or you forego a duty to that amount. Now who are they who have been paying this duty?—Why, the very men on whoſe behalf I am now ſpeaking, and they are now called upon to relinquiſh the conſideration for which they have been ſo paying, and this is uſed by Lord Caſtlereagh in Ireland as an inducement, and ſo it certainly is partially ſpeaking, to the people of Ireland to agree to the Union, by putting them in poſſeſſion of both parts of the compact of king William the Third, namely to have their bounty upon linen, and to have alſo the raw material of this country for the woollen manufactory of that, without allowing to us any benefit whatever to meet this favour. I ſhould like to be told, what reaſon there is for this.—I ſhould like to know what would be thought of this if it were a tranſaction in private life? Suppoſe a particular perſon gave another a certain ſum of money for a certain privilege, and ſuppoſe a ſuperior power came and ſaid, "you muſt continue to pay your money, but you muſt give up the object for which you paid it?" who could doubt of the profligacy of ſuch an aſſertion? and yet, ſo it is in the preſent caſe, and the only difference between the two points is,

that that caſe would affect an individual only, and this affects a multitude of individuals.—I am ſure that if I have an incorrect view of this matter, I ſhould be happy to be ſet right, but that is the view I have of it—and this ſhews the radical injuſtice of the meaſure. I ſay that the perſons for whom I am now contending have paid their ſhare of this million a year; and will the people of Ireland agree, upon the Union, to return to them their ſhare? Not at all, they are to continue to pay, and the conſideration for which they have paid is not only to be taken away from them, but alſo the means by which they have hitherto been enabled to make their payments, are to be taken away alſo. I am perfectly convinced that if the view I have taken of this matter be correct, it is the moſt unjuſt that can poſſibly be conceived. There can be no doubt what would be the deciſion of a court of juſtice, or of equity upon ſuch a caſe, if it came before them, and I know of no rule that can excuſe this Committee, or the Legiſlature collectively, for departing from the obvious principles of equity and juſtice.

There is another point of conſiderable moment.—The Petitioners on whoſe behalf I am contending, wiſh the projected Union to take place, in which I agree with them, and I ſhould

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from the general confidence I have in government, like to conſider Ireland as a part of this kingdom; but yet I have not that ſort of love for Ireland which would make me wiſh to ſee the manufacturers of this country go thither, and plant their children there, becauſe the Union had made it ineligible for them to remain here.—Here is a capital ſunk in this country to the amount of five millions ſterling, and will you leave the owners of it liable to all the inequalities and diſadvantages which muſt follow the adoption of the reſolution which is now before you?—Will you make them liable to the payment of a valuable conſideration after they are diſpoſſeſſed of the advantage for which they gave it.—Such is indeed the caſe of my conſtituents, and your petitioners.—Is it then without reaſon that I call on you to keep up the faith of parliament, which has, I ſay, pledged its honour to continue to the petitioners, the privilege, if it can be called ſo, of preſerving their own property; for I ſay parliament the moment it does any act by which it recogniſes the claims of any body of men, ſtands pledged to protect ſuch claims. Now I would aſk, whether parliament has ever recogniſed the right of the ſubjects of this country, to keep the raw material here?—Certainly it has repeatedly, and that in the moſt ſolemn manner.

Have not the ſubjects of this country a right to call the payment of one million annually for the encouragement to the Iriſh linen, a compact by which there is ſecured to them the enjoyment of the advantage ariſing from keeping the raw material of wool in this country? Certainly they have. Has not parliament, by its numerous enactments, on this ſubject, taken away almoſt entirely, all idea of any alteration? No doubt in the mind of any honeſt man they have.—And now give me leave to ſay, that this breach of parliamentary faith, for it is no leſs, in breaking the compact between the two countries upon the linen and woollen trades, is a ſurpriſe upon many of my conſtituents who have laid out their capital upon an idea of the inviolability of it, ſo much ſo, that they repent of what they have done, and would gladly undo it, but that is now impoſſible.

I have but one or two more topics to touch upon, in the inveſtigation of this ſubject.—One of them was preſſed a good deal at the bar, but I own I do not aſſign as much weight to it as the petitioners do, although it is by no means undeſerving of notice: at leaſt I think it is an evil of which we ſhould not incur the riſk, without a probable benefit.—I mean the danger there is, that by allowing our wool to go to Ireland, it may go to France, that is, that it

it may be carried from Ireland to France, or it may be reſhiped to this country, and then ſmuggled to France. I believe a conſiderable quantity has, by theſe means, found its way to France; however this is a conſideration to which I do not aſſign much danger, and yet it is ſomething.

Another article is that of freight, the freight of the article to Ireland would be conſiderably leſs than from the place of purchaſe to many of the manufacturing diſtricts of this country.—Why do I ſay theſe things? not that I grudge to Ireland any of her advantages, but to ſhew that there is no occaſion to tempt her with any artificial advantages, or to take her away from the conſideration of her natural advantages.—And this leads me to another topic on which it is impoſſible for me to forbear ſaying a word or two.—Unqueſtionably the degree of apprehenſion and alarm which this article has occaſioned, exceeds, by far, every thing that I ever heard of, for it is conſidered as no leſs than the extinction of the natural rights, as well as the wealth of thoſe who have petitioned againſt it. I hope their fears are groundleſs, but I cannot conceive that ſo many men of ſound underſtandings, of great commercial experience, of uncommon ſagacity; whoſe

minds are emancipated from the narrow views which attends commerce on a ſmall ſcale, would participate in any fear of this ſort, if it was a meaſure to free from blame, or ſo faultleſs as ſome ſeem to imagine; and I remember a ſpeech made by my right honourable friend (Mr. Pitt), in which he ſaid, that if any conſiderable alarm was likely to ariſe, that would be a reaſon for not preſſing it.—Now, I ſay, that men of the beſt underſtandings, of the largeſt comprehenſions, whoſe judgments, on any commercial point, any man would be diſpoſed to follow or agree to, all, to a man, ſay, that this propoſed exportation will be deſtructive to the woollen manufacture of this country.

I will now ſtate to the Committee another point, which I am ſure it will attend to in a very ſerious and deliberate manner.—Much, and highly, as I may often have delighted in ſeeing the effect of the commercial proſperity of this country; yet viewing it in the light I do, and convinced, as I am, that the religion of the country is the beſt ſecurity for its proſperity, I cannot help ſaying it is a drawback upon it, to obſerve that as manufactures increaſe, there is, generally ſpeaking, a proportionable deterioration in the morals of the people; and here I

muſt

muſt be allowed to put in a claim for the manufacturers of wool, for whom I am now contending.—Not from its importance or its millions of annual produce, but becauſe in addition to all this commercial proſperity, of which it is the parent; it is a manufacture carried on with more regard to morals, and from the very nature and principles of it, diffuſing more virtue and independence than any other manufacture in Great Britain.—The great way in which it is carried on is this: Each individual works up the article on which he is employed, at home with his wife and family, and when finiſhed, carries it to market, as a farmer does his butter, or any other article, and, like the farmer, comes home to his family with the produce of it.—This is a manufacture in which you have the virtuous mind, the ſimple manner, and the wholeſome fleſh and blood which give to the heart of man courage and independence, which is the parent of true liberty and happineſs in a ſocial ſtate.—Bleſſings which they will continue to enjoy, and even to improve, if you continue to them the means of ſo doing.—But would it be conducted in Ireland on the ſame principle? or rather would it not be conducted on different principles? would not property go over in large capitals, and ſo change

change the courſe of life of the manufacturers? —That would ſtill be reſpectable, indeed nothing could be more ſo, except the other.—— This is a point I muſt leave to the feelings of the Committee, as having endeavoured but imperfectly to delineate a part of it.

I have but one word more, which is, to deſire of you, not to do an irreparable injury: you may repent it even for Ireland, as well as for this country, in a permanent point of view. You leave ten thouſand other points of infinitely more importance in a national view than this: it is only from a vain idea, of which I have a right to complain, that you entertain this attempt at perfection in the abſtract in this particular; it is like endeavouring to make part of a bad road as ſmooth and level as a bowling green, while you leave the main body of it, over which the multitude is to travel, full of furrows, large indentures, abrupt banks, and cavities. If it could be ſhewn that you do not work what you actually grow of wool, then perhaps this meaſure would be right, but ſo far is that from being ſo, that you actually have too little wool to ſupply the wants of your own manufacture. I ſhould not wiſh to ſtand up and ſay that Ireland ſhould not have a ſhare; I

would

would have her take a ſhare as a ſiſter, but I cannot conſent that ſhe ſhould rob us of what is our own, and what we cannot ſpare. Conſider what it is to diſquiet this people of loyalty and virtue: conſider that they may, at any time hereafter, grant to Ireland that, the aſking for which now alarms them. Be cautious, I pray, leſt you have before you, as the melancholy effect of your own work, the ſpectacle of a fallen ſtate: it may be ſaid we have wool to ſpare, but why do you force this meaſure before you are aſſured of the truth of that aſſertion?—Let me conjure you therefore, not finally and upon abſtract principles of theoretical perfection, to ſacrifice wantonly, the intereſts of ſo important and ſo worthy a claſs of his majeſty's ſubjects as thoſe for whom I am now contending are, and confeſſed to be.

Undoubtedly the alteration I have to propoſe is by no means to continue to us the enjoyment of all we are entitled to by law: I wiſh to treat Ireland with liberality and kindneſs, but I do not wiſh to give to her, what, to her, would be little to gain, but what, to us, will be much to looſe; a loſs, and a great one, to the nation itſelf, and as ſuch, that which Ireland herſelf is deeply intereſted in preſerving—for if there be

be three millions of perſons concerned in the trade, is not Ireland intereſted in preſerving, in full health and vigour, that branch of the Britiſh empire, rather than ſacrifice it to a little wool. All that I deſire, and thoſe for whom I am arguing deſire, is, not to leave the thing as it has been hitherto ſtanding, but that they ſhould give one-half of the compact which they enjoy; and which I ſay they have, by law and juſtice, a right to claim. They no longer wiſh that Iriſh wool ſhould be imported into this country: but rather than they would allow wool to go out of this country, they will pay the million a year as they have done, for the encouragement and ſupport of the Iriſh linen trade; and they are willing that each country ſhould work as much foreign wool as they can obtain; and as to the protecting duties, they will allow them to continue; they wiſh to ſee Ireland riſing into opulence, but not upon the ruin of this country.

One word more, Sir; an additional reaſon which I forgot:—Who can ſee what the effect may be of peace, when that happy moment ſhall arrive? I have heard it doubted, by able men, whether our exports will then continue to be as large as they are now; it is a ſubject on which

which I ſhould not venture to give an opinion, but I think it is conſideration enough to make this committee pauſe before they make a change of this kind. We ſhall certainly have leſs Spaniſh wool after the war, becauſe then France will be likely to divide that article with us. Theſe are additional reaſons for the committee's pauſing awhile at leaſt, upon this ſubject: whatever we do on ſuch a matter as this is, we ſhould do deliberately: if the fears of the petitioners are groundleſs and exaggerated, the fact will appear, they will then no longer be entertained, and there will be no harm done; but the conſequences of precipitation may be dreadful.—The propoſition I have to make is in ſubſtance, to leave out of the reſolution what relates to ſuffering wool to be exported from this country, meaning that arrangement ſhould be as I have already ſtated, and that the Iriſh ſhould be allowed to work up the wool which they themſelves grow.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer.—Sir, I perfectly underſtand the nature of the amendment propoſed to be moved by my honourable friend. The grounds on which my honourable friend makes his propoſition, appear to me to be principally two; the one is, that the produce of the wool in this country is limited, and incapable

capable of increaſe; the other, that if this exportation to Ireland ſhould take place, it muſt be conſidered as ſo much dimunition of our own manufacture.

Now, warmly as I feel for the Union; warmly as I feel for the liberal principles of the commercial intercourſe which ought to ſubſiſt between us, and which ought as ſpeedily as poſſible to be carried into effect; ſtill I would not ſupport this reſolution if I thought it had the tendency ſtated by him. But, notwithſtanding the very able and eloquent manner in which my honourable friend has argued this queſtion, I certainly have not in the leaſt altered the ſentiments I originally formed upon this important ſubject. However warmly I might feel in favour of the liberal principle which ought to exiſt in the event of an incorporate Union between the two countries, viz. that there ſhould be a free commercial intercourſe between them, and however anxious I am for the application of that principle, ſtill if I were convinced, either by the evidence that was adduced at the bar, or by the ſpeech of my honourable friend, that there was any reaſonable ground for apprehending thoſe conſequences that had been predicted;—if there were any reaſon to apprehend that they would be, I will not ſay ruinous, but even detrimental

tal to that great limb of the proſperity of Great Britain, I mean the woollen manufacture, I certainly would not heſitate to deviate from that principle, of the propriety of the adoption of which I am now ſo firmly convinced. But as I am by no means convinced, either by the evidence or by the arguments, I hope the Committee will indulge me in hearing the reaſons for ſtill retaining the opinion I originally formed. After the moſt mature conſideration, after the moſt minute inveſtigation which I had been able to make upon the ſubject, I was ſatisfied that to permit the exportation of the raw material to Ireland, might gradually, and in courſe of time, be productive of advantage to Ireland; but that it could not, even upon the principles laid down by the petitioners themſelves, be productive of the leaſt miſchief to the manufacturers of England. By the adoption of the preſent article, they are doing that which in my view of the ſubject may tend greatly to the advantage of Ireland; but conſidered as a ſacrifice on the part of England would be trifling, and on the part of the manufacturers, nothing. If the views which I have taken of this ſubject be correct, I ſhall be able to prove that any transfer of any manufacture, which the adoption of this article might be ſuppoſed to make to Ireland, would not make

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any void, which would not be much more than filled up by the great and unprecedented increaſe of our trade in this article. If the effect of permitting the exportation of the raw material to Ireland, ſhould be as has been ſtated, that of transferring any portion of manufacture to Ireland, it would only be gradually, and in the courſe of a great number of years. For this reaſon I ſhall be under the neceſſity of entreating the Committee to take a more diſtinct view than perhaps they have hitherto done, of the probable conſequences of the adoption of this article; or at leaſt of that part of it which relates to the exportation of wool; and to which the arguments urged by my honourable friend are directed. I beg leave to remark, that ſome of his objections were not only inconſiſtent with, but contradictory to each other. In one part of his ſpeech, my honorable friend had contended againſt permitting the exportation of wool to Ireland, becauſe the effect of it would be to transfer the whole of the manufacture to Ireland; and in another part he objected to it, becauſe he ſaid it would be highly injurious to England, without being productive of any great advantage to Ireland. The Committee,

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and my honorable friend muſt ſee, that both theſe arguments cannot be founded, becauſe in the queſtion of the transfer of a manufacture, it was impoſſible (ſuppoſing the demand to continue, which was not doubted), that England ſhould looſe without Ireland gaining exactly in the ſame proportion. In order to form a correct eſtimate how far this manufacture can be the ſubject of transfer, and how far this article can have a tendency that way, it will be neceſſary to conſider in what markets Ireland could rival us. There are but three markets in which they could rival us; in her own, by applying ſo much as was neceſſary for her own conſumption, in foreign markets, or in our own market. I will not contend that the effect of the adoption of this article will not be in time, and by gradual progreſs to enable Ireland to ſupply her own market, and conſequently diminiſh our manufacture by ſo much as we now ſupply for the conſumption of that kingdom. I will even admit that in courſe of time Ireland might, in ſome branches of her manufacture, be able to meet perhaps, or even obtain a preference over us in foreign markets, but that ſhe ſhould be able to meet us in our own markets, I contend muſt be obviouſly im-

poſſible. It was proved to be ſo by the arguments of the counſel at the bar, by the evidence of the witneſſes, and even by what had fallen from my honorable friend himſelf. My honorable friend has advanced as an objection to the propoſed regulation, that it was unequal, becauſe it permitted the exports of the raw material to Ireland, while it eſtabliſhed protecting duties upon the manufacture. Now if the manufacturers were of opinion that it would be advantageous to them to ſuffer the Iriſh to ſend over their manufactures to England, free of duty, after we had permitted the exportation of our raw material free, it is clear that they muſt be of opinion that the manufacture muſt be ſtill cheaper and better in England, and that they entertained no apprehenſion of Ireland beating us in our own market, becauſe they otherwiſe muſt be anxious for the exiſtence of a protecting duty. I have already admitted that there might be ſome articles of manufacture, which, as induſtry muſt always find its level, might in time be diſtributed, ſome in one country and ſome in another; but the objection which had been made to the continuance of the protecting duty upon the manufacture, ſhewed that the manufacturers of this country

country were of opinion, that they would be ſtill able to beat Ireland, even after ſhe was furniſhed with the raw material neceſſary for the manufacture. Now with reſpect to the manufacture furniſhed by this country to Ireland, it amounted upon an average to about 6 or 700,000l. a year. In the laſt year it amounted to about 900,000l. but this encreaſed demand was conſidered as ariſing from temporary cauſes. Now I beg of the Committee to compare this ſupply with which we furniſhed Ireland, amounting, as had been ſtated, to 6 or 700,000l. a year, with the whole of the manufacture of this country, both for its home conſumption and for the ſupply of the foreign markets; and it will be found that the whole of the exportation to Ireland did not amount to above one-thirtieth part of our whole manufacture. I beg they would alſo compare it with the account which was given at the bar, of the increaſe which has taken place in the laſt year or two, in our manufacture. This increaſe was ſtated to amount from one million to one million and a half a year, ſo that the amount of what we ſent to Ireland, appears to be about one-thirtieth of our whole manufacture, and little more than one-third of the increaſe which had recently taken place in it.

I do not believe that my honorable friend, or any gentleman, would ſtate as a general propoſition, that each part of an united kingdom ſhould not have an equal chance of procuring the raw material for the purpoſe of manufacture, which was the produce of the whole of that kingdom; and it is clear, that ſhould they procure that raw material, and be able to manufacture it, ſo as to ſupply their own market, it would not amount to above one-third of the increaſe which we are making every year. After this ſtatement, it would be impoſſible for any gentleman to contend that this is a queſtion about ruining the great manufacture of England; of giving a ſhock to the great capital that is veſted in it; of turning the perſons occupied in it out of employment; and conſequently of increaſing the poor rates. The utmoſt that could be urged was, not that our manufacture would be diminiſhed, but that the rapid increaſe that we were making might in a ſmall degree be retarded; that our increaſe, though great, would not be quite ſo great as if we kept the Iriſh market.

With regard to the queſtion, whether the demand for this manufacture would continue to increaſe, I believe ſome difference of opinion exiſts.

exiſts. Some perſons are of opinion, that the demand will probably diminiſh on the concluſion of a peace. I have on other occaſions ſtated my reaſons for thinking that in the event of a peace, a great increaſe would take place in the whole of our commerce. But the Committee had not my opinion alone upon this ſubject; they had alſo the evidence of the witneſſes who were examined themſelves; for they have ſtated, as a reaſon againſt permitting the exportation of the raw material, the probability of an increaſed demand for the manufactures on the termination of the war. The queſtion then reſolves itſelf into this, viz. Whether, with our manufactures in a ſtate of unprecedented proſperity, which had increaſed and was likely to increaſe, we ſhould not conſent to communicate a part of our advantages to a kingdom, with whom we were about to effect a complete Union?—The next queſtion was with reſpect to the propriety on which this article was founded, viz. the propriety of permitting the free communication of a raw material from one part of an united kingdom to another. As a general principle, this has not been denied; but my honorable friend has ſtated that it is applied only to this article of

wool. This ſtatement was not correct, for the principle was not applied to the article of wool alone. The policy which governed all theſe articles, was to make the intercourſe between the two countries, with reſpect to raw materials, and the whole of the trade between the united kingdoms, as free as poſſible. It was found to be impoſſible, under all the circumſtances of the caſe, to carry this principle into full effect; but every effort had been uſed to make the exceptions to it as few in their number, as ſmall in their extent, and as ſhort in their duration as poſſible. The ground upon which theſe exceptions were admitted, was to prevent any ſudden ſhock to capital veſted in trade, which might ariſe from the permiſſion of an immediate and complete freedom of intercourſe between the two countries. It was upon this ground that I ſtated upon a former night, that although on the firſt view of the ſubject, it might be natural to ſuppoſe that in the event of an Union it would be deſirable that each country ſhould be permitted to manufacture that which it found moſt convenient; yet that could not be carried to its full extent, becauſe, ſuch a ſudden freedom of intercourſe might, in particular caſes, injure the capital veſted

veſted in particular manufactures. But though the neceſſity of ſome temporary reſtraint was clear, as applied to manufactures, it was by no means ſo when applied to the raw material. Now with reſpect to the general equity of this principle, as to its effect upon the manufactures, it had been conſidered as a doubtful queſtion, whether admitting the free exportation of wool from this to other countries, would not be beneficial to the landed intereſt, and to the commercial intereſt. Upon this point, I wiſh to give no opinion, though it was one in favor of which much might be ſaid; but when I ſee that the manufactures of this country have ariſen to ſuch an unprecedented ſtate of proſperity, by the adoption of a contrary ſyſtem, I certainly would not, upon any ſpeculative reaſoning, conſent to diſturb it, as far as related to foreign countries. If, however, it be a doubtful point, whether the free exportation of our wool would not be advantageous to our manufactures, could it be contended that it was clear, they would be ruined by permitting its exportation to Ireland? Had it been found ſo in the caſe of Scotland? Had ſhe ruined our manufactures, and transferred them to herſelf? Undoubtedly not. And yet at the time of the Union with that country, her taxes were conſiderably lighter than thoſe of England, and

are ſo yet. What was the effect of permitting the free communication of the raw material with Scotland?—Why among other ſources from which ſhe obtained that article, Scotland was one; and the woollen manufacture of Scotland is only of the coarſeſt and cheapeſt ſort.

I beg now to conſider this queſtion as it relates to the three markets in which, as I before ſtated, Ireland can by any poſſibility rival this country; and to the poſſibility of Ireland beating us in them, in conſequence of our permitting the exportation of the raw material. The firſt conſideration will apply to the comparative price of the raw material in the two countries; in order to conſider how far, by permitting Ireland to import it, ſhe might beat you in the foreign markets. Do thoſe gentlemen who predict the ruin of our manufactures take into their conſideration the wealth of Ireland as compared to that of England, when they talk of her out-bidding us in our own markets?—Surely they do not. She might, it is true, endeavour to purchaſe a certain quantity of the raw material in England, and by bidding for it increaſe the price; but would that be urged as a miſchief. If the manufacturers complained that the quantity of wool has decreaſed, ſurely the making the growth of it

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more profitable would tend to increaſe the ſupply. I do not ſee how it could be contended that Ireland could beat us in the manufacture, by procuring the raw material cheaper, and that her bidding for it, could raiſe its price. If ſhe bid for it, England, as the richer nation, might out-bid her, or at moſt ſhe could obtain it at an equal price, and then the competition between the two countries would go on as it was at preſent. With reſpect to the comparative price of the raw material in the two countries, I beg to inform gentlemen, that at this very moment the price of it is ſomething higher in England than it is in Ireland. My honorable friend has not, in the courſe of his ſpeech, adverted to this circumſtance; he has merely ſtated, that ſome time ago it was cheaper in England; but it appears from the concurrent teſtimony of all the witneſſes, its price has been regularly increaſing in England for the laſt ten years. I cannot undertake to ſpeak with abſolute certainty upon the ſubject, but I have received my information from a perſon not likely to be miſtaken, and who would not certainly, intentionally miſtake the fact. I underſtand that the average price of wool in Ireland is from 16*s.* to 18*s.* per ſtone, their ſtone being 18lb. I am alſo informed by other accounts

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that the price of Britiſh wool of the ſame kind is ten-pence halfpenny per pound, which is about the ſame price. The witneſſes have ſtated, that a pack of wool of 240lb. now coſt 11*l.* 10*s.* or about eleven-pence per pound. It is true that in ſome particular kinds of wool the price is higher in Ireland, but that is of the finer ſorts; the general price is greater in England. I contend, therefore, that as far as depends upon the comparative price of the raw material in the two countries, the regulation now propoſed cannot have the effect of tranſferring the manufactures to Ireland. But even if wool was cheaper in England, Ireland by purchaſing here muſt render the price of that article the ſame in both countries, and conſequently the inequality in point of price, which is ſo much dreaded, would be done away.

Another argument which has been urged both by the learned counſel and by my honorable friend, has, I confeſs, very much aſtoniſhed me. They have ſtated, that from the great cheapneſs of freight, wool might be ſent at leſs expence to Ireland than it can be from one part of England to another. Even taking the calculation as they have made it, the difference would be ſo ſmall, as not to produce any perceptible conſequence; but their mode of mak-

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ing the calculation is extremely inaccurate, for they compared thoſe parts of England, which are much nearer to Ireland than they are to Yorkſhire, with the moſt diſtant poſſible communication between one part of England and another. If the Committee would examine the evidence, they would find with reſpect to all places from which Yorkſhire drew its ſupply of wool, the communication between them and Yorkſhire was much more eaſy than between them and Ireland.

The next argument which has been urged is, that the cheapneſs of wages in Ireland would enable her to manufacture cheaper. Upon this ſubject there are many conſiderations, which muſt ſuggeſt themſelves to gentlemen's minds. It was ſtated that as wages and taxes were lower in Ireland they muſt beat England, where wages and taxes were higher. This was aſſuming a principle which contradicted the experience of the world, that a country that was taxed more lightly was better able to carry on manufactures than a richer country labouring under heavier taxation. If that propoſition was true, would Great Britain in her manufactures have riſen to ſuch an unexampled height, under ſuch a weight of taxation? The calculation which the learned counſel made upon the ſubject, was

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the moſt extraordinary and the moſt inapplicable that imagination could conceive. He took the whole of the taxes of the two countries, and divided them by the number of the inhabitants, and ſtated the reſult as the amount of each man's contribution. It was really aſtoniſhing how ſuch a calculation could be made.—How many parts in this country in which the taxes had no effect upon the price of wages? Did the land tax, did the aſſeſſed taxes (which only fell upon houſes of a ſuperior deſcription to thoſe inhabited by labourers) did the ſtamp duties, increaſe the price of wages? Did all the taxes upon articles of luxury, upon wine, upon the higher kind of teas, increaſe the price of wages? Theſe various articles, with others which I could enumerate, which conſtitute two-thirds of the revenue of the whole kingdom, could they be put into the general average, as the learned counſel had done?—Certainly not. But I do even believe that it would be found, upon examination, that Ireland was taxed in a higher degree than England. I alſo do differ from the learned counſel, in conſidering the nominal price of wages as the ſtandard. In ſpeaking of the wages given to a manufacturer, there are two conſiderations which occur, it was undoubtedly true that agricultural labor

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was cheaper in Ireland, but in various branches of manufactures, particularly thoſe which required ſuperior ſkill, ſuch as in the cotton, the woollen and linen, the wages are higher in Ireland than in England.—This is alſo more particularly the caſe with overſeers and perſons of that deſcription, to whom very high wages indeed are given to get them over from England.

The next and moſt important queſtion is that reſpecting the capital. Where capital is in ſuch a commanding ſtate, as it is in England, it is much eaſier to continue and ſupport a manufacture than it is to eſtabliſh one in a country differently circumſtanced with regard to capital. It has been ſtated, that in order to carry on this manufacture, which produced near twenty millions annually, there was a capital of £6,000,000 actually ſunk: What temptation have the manufacturers to transfer all the manufactures of this country to Ireland?—Why, in the firſt place, they muſt give up the ſix millions they have ſunk in England; and before they could eſtabliſh it in Ireland, they muſt ſink ſix millions more there. I ſtate this to ſhew, not that Ireland would not derive any advantage from this regulation, but that there is not the leaſt reaſon to apprehend that ſudden tranſ-

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fer which could give a ſhock to the veſted capital.

The next part of the ſubject is that which relates to the ſtate of the ſkill and machinery in the two countries. There is much difficulty in finding the extent to which our manufactures are benefited by the improvement of machinery: that it has done much, however, is perfectly clear. There is a difference in the ſtatement of the degree in which the manufacture depended upon machinery; but take it either way, and the concluſion is the ſame. If little of the manufacture was carried on by machinery, then moſt of it muſt depend upon human ſkill and ingenuity. If that were ſo, it is not the day labourer but the ſkilful manufacturer that is wanted, and then Ireland would have no advantage, for the reaſons before ſtated. If, on the other hand, moſt of it depended upon machinery, then all the argument about the cheapneſs of labor in Ireland falls to the ground, for machinery is as dear in one country as it is in the other. Taking the queſtion therefore in either point of view, Ireland would not have the advantage over this country.

The next argument is to ſhew, that if this exportation is allowed, Ireland from its ſituation will have an advantage over us, on account of her

her ports being more favorable to fit out for the Weſt Indies, America, or almoſt any part of Europe, and having the ſame means to obtain Spaniſh wool. Now upon the ſubject of Spaniſh wool, and alſo upon that of their own linen, I would aſk, how ſtands the fact? I would aſk whether they have rivalled us in Spaniſh wool, and whether they have not exported their own linen, through Great Britain? It appears upon the ſubject of Spaniſh wool, they bear no reſemblance to us; and that as to the ſubject of their own linen, we have exported more of it for them than they have been able to export for themſelves. Now I aſk, whether theſe facts do not in reality amount to an anſwer to that part of the objection to the exportation of wool to Ireland. And how did this ariſe? Am I ſpeaking this in London, at that port, which is more unfavourable than many others, in ſeveral points of view—more unfavourable on account of its being thronged with ſhipping, and clogged and almoſt choaked with trade, ſo much ſo, that the legiſlature are very properly entertaining meaſures to render it more commodious. What is the reaſon why trade comes here from Ireland?—that the linen of that country came for the purpoſe only of being afterwards exported again, under all the

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tedioufneſs of failing, and the demurrage and other incidental inconveniencies that are inſeparable from ſuch a courſe?—what is it that brings ſuch a trade here?—what but the capital and the aſſortment that are peculiar to this metropolis? That capital and aſſortment would create trade at any time. It is a capital and an aſſortment not to be equalled in any part of the globe. The truth is, that the argument of my honorable friend againſt the continuance of the protecting duty upon the manufacture, is completely anſwered, as I have ſtated already. I would obſerve alſo, that we are more likely to underſell Ireland, than Ireland is to underſell us in the foreign market.

The reſult of all this is, that there does not appear any probability, for there is no proſpect that Ireland can rival us in any conſiderable degree in the foreign market. Now with regard to the home market, which in ſeveral points of view is more important than the other, conſidering the ſubject with reſpect to ſkill, to capital, and to aſſortment, three points extremely material, the advantage is clearly in favor of Great Britain; nor is the advantage we have moſt clearly in the article of fuel of ſlight import in a queſtion of manufacture.—The caſe being thus ſituated, there is not the

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leaſt injury to be apprehended from allowing this exportation; there being, as I have contended, and hope ſucceſsfully, no inconvenience to Great Britain, nor any danger to be apprehended that Ireland could rival us, either in the home or foreign market.—That in the event of their being able by the free importation to ſupply the whole of their own conſumption, it would amount in the diminution to us to no more than one-thirtieth part of our whole manufacture, or more than one-third part of the whole annual increaſe for the laſt three or four years; and that conſideration is ſupported by the conviction, that our capital will continue to increaſe much more rapidly than theirs, and that it will neceſſarily create a greater demand for labour, and conſequently give a greater ſpur to the induſtry of our inhabitants, as well as cauſe a greater demand for the raw material than could be expected to be produced by them. Now, having diſcuſſed theſe points, I think I may allege, that I have ſaid enough to ſhew that there can be no danger from this transfer to Ireland; but then I come to the queſtion of the raw material. If I have ſhewn ſatisfactorily to the Committee, that that part of it, which is likely to go to Ireland muſt, from the nature of things, be limited, it fol-

lows, as matter of courſe, that the evil, if there can be any reſulting from it, muſt be limited alſo; upon which I feel myſelf entitled to ſay—there is in the whole conſideration of that part of the ſubject, nothing to juſtify a deviation from that liberal principle of free intercourſe, which is the baſis of the Union between the two countries.

Upon what ground the produce of wool is to form an exception from all other produce of the earth, or the traffic of the world, I own I am at a loſs to decide. It was ſtated that the growth of wool could not be increaſed, and that particularly the growth of fine wool was confined to a few ſpots, and to a particular breed of ſheep. Now, in point of fact, it appears in evidence from ſome of thoſe gentlemen, who were witneſſes called on behalf of the petitioners at the bar, that in Hampſhire, by the introduction of the South Down ſheep, the breed which produced the fineſt wool had greatly increaſed.—I ſpeak this, as well as many other things upon this queſtion, in the preſence of many members, from whom the Committee might expect information much ſuperior to any thing I could preſume to offer; but I ſpeak it with that ſpecies of confidence a man ought to have when he follows intelligence

gence on which he can rely. Under that impreſſion, I would aſſert, as I believe, that where fodder has been improved in quantity, and where there has been artificial or forced graſs, the quantity of wool has been increaſed without injury to its quality, that the ſpecies of ſheep which produced the fineſt wool in one place has been tranſported to another, and there the breed of ſheep has been the ſame as originally, and the fineneſs of the wool has continued.

So much for increaſing the quantity without deteriorating the quality of the wool. With reſpect to another argument, or rather aſſertion, (for it has been argued that the practice of incloſure has tended to diminiſh the quantity of the wool) the fallacy of it muſt be obvious upon the firſt view, becauſe whatever had a tendency to the multiplication of ſheep, muſt have a tendency to the increaſe of wool. I apprehend, therefore, that the general aſſertion that incloſure is unfavourable to the growth of wool is ill-founded. It contradicts the ordinary notions we have of the produce of nature. It is, however, no reproach to the manufacturers who appeared as witneſſes at the bar in ſupport of the petitioners, that they, in their ample wiſhes for abundance of the raw material, ſhould have expreſſed, as they felt, great uneaſi-

neſs for themſelves, or that my honorable friend ſtated for them that uneaſineſs. It was natural enough for men, whoſe minds were pre-occupied by alarm and apprehenſion, to ſtate their opinions warmly and eagerly. It was natural for them too to proceed to any length, even in opinion, which an unintereſted perſon would not keep up with. But with all the zeal, the laudable zeal, of thoſe parties, neither my honorable friend for them, nor they for themſelves, could convince the committee, that although they were extremely good judges of the work they performed on the raw material, they were as good judges of the growth of the raw material, as country gentlemen or farmers; thoſe who have for the greateſt part of their lives been employed in purſuits of agriculture. With this deficiency or inferiority of judgment, it is not wonderful that they recommended a policy, which if purſued would produce leſs of the raw material inſtead of more.

The next queſtion in its order was whether an increaſe of the price of wool would contribute to the increaſe of the article? Upon this ſubject I muſt ſubmit, that it appeared that the growth of wool muſt have increaſed conſiderably within theſe ten years, although they concluded the contrary: this would be manifeſt to the committee from the very cauſe which they

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aſſigned for its diminution. By the ſtatement of theſe manufacturers themſelves, it appeared that in the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-two they experienced the ſame ſcarcity as now, and the demand was the ſame then as now: I would therefore aſk, whether I am not juſtified in ſaying, that the whole of the wool was worked up at that period? My honorable friend ſaid, No, that the then apparent ſcarcity aroſe from a partial demand for clothing the French army. The whole export was only £150,000 to France, which exceeded the uſual annual export by no more than £60,000, which upon the amount of £8,000,000, was next to nothing, and could not poſſibly have been the cauſe of the ſcarcity of the wool. What then was the concluſion from all this? Why, that the whole was worked up, as it is at preſent: and my honorable friend commented upon a demand that did not keep up, nor could poſſibly be the cauſe of the ſcarcity of which he ſpoke. My honorable friend ſaid that the manufacturers of the Weſt Riding of Yorkſhire had purchaſed wool, and worked and acted on the ſtrength of this demand for clothing the French army; and this produced a temporary and partial ſcarcity. The manufacturers of the Weſt Riding of Yorkſhire have talents which lead them to in-

quire into the nature of a demand before they worked much upon the proſpect of it. Then would my honorable friend tell me, that ſuch a demand as that which was made on the behalf of the French army, for clothing, could influence theſe manufacturers, and produce the ſcarcity which took place?—Taking the whole of theſe things together, I feel myſelf entitled to conclude, that in the year 1792 the whole of the raw material was worked up. This was confirmed alſo by the price which wool bore at that period. Now I would aſk the committee what could have ſupported the increaſe of our exportation of cloth ſince that period, which was annually not leſs than £1,300,000, as appeared by the Cuſtom Houſe books?—Nothing certainly but the increaſe of growth. In addition to this, I have the ſtatements of the manufacturers themſelves, that the home manufacture has been more increaſing during the whole of that period. It has increaſed in proportion to the export trade; indeed the export trade of this article could not increaſe without increaſing in proportion the home trade. We could not increaſe ſuch a manufacture as this, without increaſing the home manufacture; and therefore I have made a very large allowance for the prejudices of others, who ſaid, that the ſupply of the article muſt have been equal to

two

two millions and a half annually, on account of the home trade. We muſt have the increaſe from ſome place or other.

Now upon the ſubject of Spaniſh wool, I have to obſerve, that the importation was very inconſiderable from the year 1792, not more than would produce £. 20,000 annually, at the eſtimate of 4s. 6d. per pound. It has been ſtated the value of the manufacture was generally three times the value of the raw material; that was correct with regard to the coarſer commodities, but of the finer, I believe, the value of manufacture does not exceed double that of the raw material. This importation of Spaniſh wool would account for but a ſmall portion of the two millions and an half of the annual increaſe of the trade in manufacture, which I have ſtated. This increaſe muſt have been ſupported ſome how; by what means could it have been ſupported?—By none, moſt unqueſtionably, but by an increaſe of the raw material; and this during the very time, and even at the very moment, when my honorable friend ſuppoſed the raw material to be diminiſhed. If I could ſhew, as indeed I truſt I have ſhewn, to the entire ſatisfaction of the committee, that the manufacturers, who ap-

peared at the bar as witneſſes, and alſo my honorable friend, had miſconceived the ſtate of the growth of wool, I muſt be allowed to doubt the accuracy of their calculation, as to the probable future growth of that article.

The next point to be conſidered, is whether the tendency of an advance in the price, in the article of wool, would be that of increaſing the quantity of that article?—I ſpeak without any unpleaſant apprehenſion upon the ſubject, when I feel a probability of an advance in the price, that it would not tend to injure the manufacture, while the advance was moderate.—The manufacturers themſelves admitted, and it muſt occur to the candour of my honorable friend, when he comes to review the ſubject, that an increaſe in the price has a tendency to increaſe the quantity. This is a thing too obvious to be diſputed, ſince wool, like every other commodity, muſt depend in a great meaſure on the encouragement that is given to its production. But to ſay no more upon that ſubject; I aſk the committee to conſider another, and to examine what is likely to be the effect of union in the view of the operation of the capital: would it not occur to any man to think the effect of a redundancy of capital in Ireland,

would

would be to improve the infant agriculture of that country?—who could doubt that that which happened to Scotland after the union, would happen to Ireland after the union?—who could doubt that although by this allowance of importation into Ireland, we convey a part of our wealth into that kingdom; yet that we ſhould be amply repaid by the increaſe it will create in the agriculture of that country, in the increaſe it will create in the commerce of that country, without materially affecting ours, for the reaſons I have already ſtated. Has wool any particular preference to the increaſing wealth of Ireland, which by a wiſe policy might be and would be rapidly increaſed?—Has the continuance of that article in its preſent channel, any decided preference over the vigour and increaſing induſtry which would follow an increaſe of this manufacture for the home, as well as foreign market; the home eſpecially, which is the moſt beneficial of all markets, conſidered with reference to its effects on the œconomy of nations?—There is no part of the wealth of Ireland, whether its landed or commercial intereſt be conſidered, which will not open a field for the ſurplus or redundant capital of Great Britain after the union, and eſpecially after this article

article is agreed to. Ireland will not be truly great either in agriculture or commerce, without opening a new market for the vent of the commodities which they have.

Theſe are the arguments by which I hope and truſt I have anſwered the objections of my honorable friend, and refuted the concluſions of the manufacturers who were examined at the bar, to the ſatisfaction of the committee; and by which I hope the great fabric of the Britiſh empire is to be upheld, and continue to be the admiration of ſurrounding nations. I give my honorable friend full credit for the purity of that zeal which has animated his eloquence in behalf of his conſtituents to-night; and in doing ſo, I am aware of doing my honorable friend no more than juſtice. I hope, however, that all the members of the committee, feel no partial or local tie, but that they all feel they are the repreſentatives of the people at large. I hope they are the impartial repreſentatives of the whole intereſts of the Britiſh Empire: that they all feel for Yorkſhire, as well as my honorable friend, but Yorkſhire only as one part; and that they feel it as their great and paramount duty, to embrace the whole of the United Empire. I hope there is

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not one of the members of the committee, who do not feel the ardour of patriotiſm for the whole empire, as well as my honourable friend does for his conſtituents, and for whoſe intereſt he has diſplayed ſo much eloquence, animated no doubt, by a ſincere and entire conviction that what he was doing is conformable to the intereſts of the whole Empire. I hope there is not a ſingle member of the committee who does not feel with due regard, the liberal manner in which my honorable friend's conſtituents had come forward in defence of the conſtitution of this country, and in ſupport of that war, which was undertaken and is carried on, to preſerve it, and with it all the bleſſings which a community can enjoy. I truſt there is not a member of the committee, who does not feel ſentiments of reſpect and eſteem for the petitioners againſt the article of the union, when they inſtructed their learned counſel to ſay they rejoiced at the progreſs that was made in, and the proſpect of completion of an incorporating union between Great Britain and her Siſter Kingdom, which will unite the wiſhes and conſolidate the ſtrength of both. I hope the members of the committee feel nothing but a ſincere deſire to promote the real welfare of the Britiſh Empire; although

although from different views they have of the ſame ſubject, they may conſcientiouſly hold different opinions upon it. I do not hope by what I have ſaid to alter the opinions of thoſe, who after ſo attentive a view of the ſubject as they have taken, have formed their opinions againſt the ſide of the queſtion I am now ſupporting: I do not expect it—it would be vain to expect that either my honorable friend, or thoſe on whoſe behalf he had ſo eloquently ſpoken, would think that what they heard from me was ſatisfactory or concluſive. I know too much of the progreſs of the human mind, when bent upon a particular object, and governed by its wiſhes, to have any ſuch expectation. I give thoſe gentlemen full credit for the purity of their motives; I hope they will treat me with the ſame candour: I truſt, however, that what I have ſaid is ſatisfactory to the committee, and that it will have gradually out of doors, among my honorable friend's conſtituents, the effect of removing their preſent very anxious apprehenſions.

There remains only one more point to be conſidered, and that is relative to the effect of allowing the exportation of wool; on this my honorable friend has not inſiſted ſo ſtrenuouſly

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as the learned counſel who ſummed up the evidence. The argument was, that allowing the exportation of wool to Ireland, was in effect to allow it to every foreign port, and particularly to France. Now there are only two ways of effecting ſuch a purpoſe; either of carrying clandeſtinely from Ireland into France, or of ſhipping it, and then to ſmuggle it into France: of the firſt there is no danger in particular; none that is not applicable to our coaſting trade; it cannot be done without paſſing the Land's-End: and as to the other, it is only the ſame danger as applied to any article that might be at Southampton, or any port in the channel, or from any part of our coaſt that was open to that of the enemy; and which from the nature of the thing, muſt be left to thoſe cuſtom-houſe regulations, by which every article of ſmuggling is proceeded againſt, perhaps as well as human ingenuity could deviſe.

This, indeed, is not an important point, as my honourable friend himſelf admitted, although the learned counſel laid conſiderable ſtreſs upon it: I would not however paſs it by, becauſe I was unwilling in a matter ſo important as the preſent, to paſs by any thing that has been preſſed, whether important or trivial; but

but the great points on which I reſt this queſtion are theſe:—This reſolution can derange no capital, put no manufactory out of work; it can create no void, but the effect of it is to be gradual; it requires no proviſion that is inconſiſtent with the freedom of either country; ſo far from impeding the progreſs of trade, it opens a new market for the general induſtry of the inhabitants of the Empire. The part it will take of the raw material of this country, is of no importance as a diminution of the means of wealth in one country, but may become conſiderably ſo when added to the means of the other: if it ſhould create any advance in the price of the raw material, it is likely to be ſo moderate, as only to increaſe the produce, a thing in itſelf deſirable, even in the opinion of its opponents; or if the increaſe ſhould be ſo great as to become an evil, it is an evil which from its nature will cure itſelf. The tendency of this meaſure is to increaſe the demand for the manufacture, to give vigour to a ſyſtem of induſtry; it has a tendency to increaſe the capital employed in one country, and is highly beneficial to the intereſts of both; it is to the advantage of the Empire at large, and will be ſo to the petitioners themſelves. It is from a firm

perſuaſion

perſuaſion of the truth of all theſe propoſitions, that I am going to vote for that which is before the committee; I do ſo from a full ſenſe of public duty, and I only regret, that ſo large and ſo uſeful a claſs as the petitioners are of an opinion to the contrary.

Mr. Henry Laſcelles ſaid, that on a former occaſion he voted for the union; he was now called upon to give his vote on the terms of that union.—He felt himſelf at liberty to give his opinion on that clauſe in the article, permitting the exportation of wool to Ireland. The houſe was in poſſeſſion of many petitions from the principal manufacturing towns againſt that meaſure; and though it was ſtated in the ſpeech of the right honorable the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that there was a ſufficiency of wool in the country for the ſupply of our manufactures, yet on evidence taken at the bar, it appeared, that there was not, even with the importation of Spaniſh wool. The conſequence was, that if there was none, but a bare or deficient ſupply, under the exportation of wool to Ireland, there muſt be a conſiderable deficiency. The growth of wool, which was in the Southern and Weſtern counties of England, would furniſh Ireland with an advantage over us, from

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the facility of importing it at an eaſier rate.—He admitted that the union was beneficial, but that the benefits were in favour of Ireland: ſecurity would certainly be gained to the Empire, and ſtability from its conſolidation; notwithſtanding which, Ireland may be benefited amply, without this ſacrifice of our ſtaple growth; and on thoſe reaſons he voted againſt that reſolution.

Mr. Thornton voted for Mr. Wilberforce's amendment.

Doctor Lawrence objected to the reſolution, and following up his objection, was entering on a full diſcuſſion of the Union, when the lateneſs of the hour rendered the houſe impatient for coming to a deciſion.—The learned Doctor concluded abruptly, recommending the committee to their God, their conſciences, and their country, for their conduct and vote on the occaſion.

Colonel Wood ſpoke againſt the reſolution—every gentleman, he thought, may expreſs his diſapprobation of this article, without interfering with the main queſtion of Union. The queſtion was here loudly and unanimouſly called for, when

Mr. Smith roſe under the impatience of the houſe, ſtill calling for the queſtion.

Mr. W. Smith

Mr. William Smith ſaid, that he roſe for the dignity of the Houſe, ſaying, that he never beheld a more proſtituted impatience. He was proceeding, when the gallery was ordered to be cleared, for the purpoſe of dividing the Committee on the reſolution under its conſideration.

The Committee divided on the reſolution of Mr. Wilberforce;

Ayes - - - - -	53
Noes - - - - -	133
Majority againſt the amendment	80

The reſolution was then carried without a diviſion.

A converſation took place on the receiving of the report.

Mr. Everett made it his buſineſs, he ſaid, to extend his inquiries through Glouceſterſhire, Wiltſhire, Dorſet, &c. and heard not one word of ruin to be apprehend from this regulation. On his particular enquiry whether the export of wool, was likely to produce any ſuch effect, he was told not. A manufacturing town in Wiltſhire, (Trowbridge) held a meeting expreſsly for this purpoſe, a diſcuſſion took place,

and the deciſion was, that the exportation of wool would not be prejudicial to Great Britain.*

Mr.

* The Committee have been informed, from the moſt reſpectable authority, that no regular or public meeting was held at Trowbridge on the occaſion. The only occurence like a meeting, was a converſation that took place between ſome of the principal clothiers of that town; who, conceiving it to be irregular for the inhabitants to petition, (being manufacturers of Spaniſh wool *only*) one of them undertook, by the deſire and in the name of the reſt, to return their thanks to the Committee in London, and to aſſign that circumſtance as the reaſon of their not meeting or petitioning.

Similar ſentiments prevailed in other neighbouring towns where Spaniſh wool is excluſively manufactured; but they undoubtedly approved the proceedings of the manufacturers of Engliſh wool, and expreſſed that approbation, by letters, to the Committee, conveying the beſt wiſhes for their ſucceſs.

The Committee certainly poſſeſſed the beſt channels of information, by their connection and correſpondence with all the woollen manufacturers of the kingdom; and in no one inſtance have they heard of a woollen manufacturing town, or even of a ſingle manufacturer of Engliſh wool, who did not think the allowing the exportation to Ireland would be injurious to Great Britain. They have not aſſumed the character of ſtateſmen; but they humbly preſume that they muſt know the facts, on which their own commercial intereſts are founded, at leaſt as well as any member of either Houſe. They did not come forward as diſintereſted men; but they appeared before the Legiſlature to implore a continuance of protection to their intereſts, which

Mr. Hobhouſe corrected the ſtatement of Mr. Everett.—There was a meeting at Trowbridge, and another at Bradford, and neither was againſt the exportation of wool to Ireland, becauſe neither was aggrieved by it, as their manufactures were of fine Spaniſh wool, and not of our native produce.

Mr. Everett ſaid, he underſtood their manufactures were of Spaniſh and Engliſh wool.

Mr. Hobhouſe reaſſured the Committee of the correctneſs of his own ſtatement.

Mr. Baſtard ſaid, that the apprehenſions of Devonſhire were as great as Yorkſhire on this new meaſure. It would transfer the capital of England to Ireland, and with it the manufac-

which they conceived to be inſeparably interwoven with thoſe of the whole empire, and particularly thoſe of their Britiſh fellow ſubjects. But if (as they are bound from the determination of parliament to ſuppoſe) it be thought by that high tribunal to be neceſſary for the greater good of the united kingdoms that their intereſts ſhould be ſacrificed, they ſubmit as becomes loyal ſubjects. If this meaſure ſhould indeed turn out to advantage, they will rejoice, as good members of the ſtate. And on the other hand, ſhould it prove (as they ſtrongly apprehend it will) very injurious to the country at large, as well as themſelves, and the individuals they repreſent, they will enjoy the conſolation of having done their duty in a manner becoming men of integrity, lovers of order, and friends to government.

tures too.—Thoſe apprehenſions were juſt, and he participated in them.

Mr. Buxton expreſſed his ſurpriſe that the landed intereſt never once entered in conſideration, to whom the exportation of wool would be ſo beneficial.—That intereſt paid taxes, poor-rates, and he did not know why, in a great national arrangement, it ſhould be proſcribed. The landholders were already conſiderable ſufferers by the prohibition, and he called the Committee to a due conſideration of their caſe.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer ſaid, that the ſupply was obtained from the wool of the ſucceeding ſeaſon, and contended, that from the moment an encroachment was made, there was an end of the argument drawn from an accumulation on ſpeculation. But if, in addition to this, it is admitted that the ſupply in full of that year, as alſo ſtated, was inſufficient; then his own arguments were ſtrengthened by the increaſe of the manufactures of the country being ſo much greater than its woollen produce; and if the importation of Spaniſh wool be not ſo great as to account for that increaſe, the inference of an increaſe in the material of wool in this country was fairly drawn from ſuch a circumſtance in favor of his argument.

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The Chancellor of the Exchequer propoſed that the report be received to-morrow; Mr. Tierney was for ſome delay. Each perſiſted; Mr. Tierney founded his propoſition on the precedent of the Scotch Union; as the report was not received till two days after the buſineſs was cloſed in the Committee.

Mr. Pitt founded his propoſition on the whole of the time this ſubject had been under conſideration; much longer in duration than the Scotch Union, and inſiſted on the report being received to-morrow. Mr. Tierney ſaid, he would take the ſenſe of the Houſe upon it.—The Houſe was reſumed, and the report from the Committee made, on which Mr. Pitt moved, "That it ſhould be received to-morrow." On this Mr. Tierney moved his amendment, "That it ſhould be received on Monday morning."

The Houſe divided on the amendment.

Ayes - - - - -	13
Noes - - - - -	58
Majority againſt the amendment	45

The report was then ordered to be received on the morrow.

No. VII.

SPEECH

OF

THOMAS PLUMER, Esq.

As Counſel for the Petitioners,

ON SUMMING UP BEFORE THE LORDS,

On the 2d of May, 1800.

My Lords,

BEFORE I ſtate the caſe of the Petitioners, for whom I have the honor to appear, your Lordſhips will, I hope, permit me, in the name of my clients and myſelf, to return our moſt grateful acknowledgements for the kind indulgence with which your Lordſhips were pleaſed to honor us laſt night. It will be my earneſt endeavour, in return for that great condeſcen-

tion and indulgence, to employ as ſmall a portion of your Lordſhips valuable time in the diſcuſſion of this great ſubject as the importance of it, and the duty impoſed on me, ſeem to require: and I hope your Lordſhips will pardon me if I ſhould preſume to ſolicit the honor of your Lordſhips attention, whilſt without meaning to waſte a moment of your time in departing from the queſtion before you, I take the liberty, on the part of the Petitioners, to ſtate the grounds upon which their apprehenſions are founded, of the effect which the meaſure now under conſideration will produce on them and their manufacture. They hope they have laid before your Lordſhips, in argument and evidence, ſufficient ground, at leaſt, to induce your Lordſhips to forbear coming to a final and irrecoverable deciſion upon this great queſtion. They do not undertake to ſtate that they have made out, by clear and demonſtrative evidence, what will be the certain effect of the meaſure in queſtion, but they hope, if it ſhall appear that there is at leaſt conſiderable danger attending it;—that a valuable and important manufacture will be expoſed by it to conſiderable hazard and peril, that will be deemed a ſufficient reaſon why your Lordſhips ſhould not adopt it in the mode propoſed. I am perfectly

aware

aware of the manner in which, in ſome places, the complaints of Petitioners of this deſcription are apt to be treated; but I am ſure before your Lordſhips, the Petitions of a very reſpectable and numerous body of men, engaged in ſo important a manufacture, will not be thought unworthy of attention.—Without arrogating to themſelves any knowledge, that does not belong to their limited ſphere of life, they may be permitted to expect credit, for at leaſt underſtanding rightly and detailing correctly plain facts, falling within their own knowledge and obſervation; from whence they have drawn what they conceive to be an extremly plain concluſion. My Lords, they feel it difficult to reconcile it to their underſtanding, how the meaſure that is now propoſed, can be rendered conſiſtent, either with what is due in juſtice to them, or with a due regard to the moſt important intereſts of the community. They do not preſume to apply to your Lordſhips upon the preſent occaſion, I am ſure your Lordſhips will believe, from any wiſh to embarraſs the operations of government, to which none of his Majeſty's ſubjects in any part of the kingdom are more zealouſly and loyally attached, nor to interrupt the progreſs of the great meaſure of the Union of the two kingdoms,

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under the conſideration of Parliament, for the ſpeedy and effectual completion of which, as far as they may be preſumed to exerciſe any judgment reſpecting it, they have expreſſed their ardent wiſhes.—But, my Lords, it is an extremely different queſtion which is now before you.—It reſpects one particular part of a ſingle article of the Union. The complaint of the Petitioners is that, circumſtanced as their trade now is, the free unlimited export for ever of the raw material of wool, without duty and without reſtraint, to the neighbouring kingdom of Ireland, ſhould conſtitute a part of the indiſſoluble Union about to be entered into between the two kingdoms.

They have felt it extremely difficult to reconcile to their humble underſtandings how in the preſent ſtate of this manufacture, at a period of time when every part of the wool of this kingdom is unqueſtionably worked up into manufacture, when the whole of it is very inadequate to the purpoſes of their trade, when it is employed in the ſupport of a manufacture which yields in the total exported out of the kingdom, no leſs than eight millions and a half, and in a total of annual manufacture, to the extent at leaſt of twenty millions ſterling; which employs at this moment a number of perſons, unqueſtionably not leſs than between one and two millions,

lions. My Lords, they have found it difficult, I ſay, to reconcile to their underſtanding, how this ſhould be the period of all others, when for the firſt time ever known in this country, the export of wool ſhould be propoſed to be allowed. Nay, further, my Lords, not ſolely that the export ſhould, under theſe circumſtances and at this time, be adopted, and all the prohibitory laws upon the ſubject repealed, but that they ſhould be repealed for ever: not only that your petitioners ſhould be at preſent deprived of your Lordſhips protecting aid, but that your Lordſhips would put it out of your power ever to extend that protection to them in future. This is the ſubject of their complaint; all that they ſolicit of your Lordſhips is, that the ſubject may not thus be irrevocably bound and fixed. They do not wiſh for an irrevocable deciſion on the other ſide, viz. that the prohition ſhould be made perpetual, and not be liable to regulation by the authority and controul of the Imperial Parliament: they requeſt only, that this, like every other ſubject conſtituting a part of the exports and imports of a great nation, fluctuating as they muſt do from time to time, with the articles that are the ſubject of them, may be left out of the definitive compact, ſo that it may be free for the United Parliament hereafter, to make ſuch regulations upon the

ſubject,

ſubject, as the ſtate of the commodity from time to time ſhall render proper. They do not now preſume to ſtate that they can offer to your Lordſhips more than the grounds upon which they deprecate an immediate and final deciſion. They ſubmit with the greateſt humility and deference to your Lordſhips, theſe grounds, conceiving them to be, at leaſt ſufficient to ſhew, that there is that danger attending upon the meaſure propoſed to be adopted, to induce your Lordſhips to ſuſpend for a time, any final deciſion upon it.

I am aware, that ſome of thoſe who have expreſſed an opinion in favour of this meaſure, have adopted it upon a very general ground, that of calling in queſtion the wiſdom of the prohibitory laws upon the export of wool, and arraigning the property of them in toto; and undoubtedly whoever is of that opinion, that the laws are fundamentally vitious and impolitic—that there ought never to have been any prohibition laid on the exportation of wool, but that it ought to be laid open to all parts of the world, will be diſpoſed to approve, upon that ground, the preſent meaſure of an export to Ireland. But before that opinion is adopted irrevocably, I am perſuaded your Lordſhips will think there is ſome deference due to the wiſdom and experience of paſt ages. The fixt policy

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of this country, now uniformly purſued for a century and a half, has been directly the reverſe: it has been deemed a firſt principle of our commercial policy, to continue in the ſtricteſt manner, the prohibition upon the export of wool, as eſſentially neceſſary for the preſervation of the trade and manufacture of this country. I am not now ſtating that this forms the whole of the queſtion for your Lordſhips conſideration, but it is one general and leading propoſition, and therefore demands examination, in the commencement of the argument.—Your Lordſhips will remember upon what high authority and what venerable ground, this ſyſtem of policy is founded, even in the earlieſt period of our manufactures, before it was known that all the wool produced in this country would be worked up in the kingdom; when it was only for the purpoſe of encouraging what was ſo much wiſhed,—in the confidence that a ſtrict prohibition of the export might ultimately effectuate that great object of the nation's hope; the provident wiſdom of the legiſlature, with perſevering ſteadineſs, adopted this ſyſtem: neither was it the ſyſtem of one period, or of one reign, but the ſubject of an uniform ſeries of acts of parliament paſſed from time to time at diſtant intervals, in the courſe of no leſs than fifteen different reigns. All the wiſeſt ſtateſmen

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that have ſat in both houſes of parliament, have given it the ſanction of their approbatory judgment upon the ſubject; taking to their aid all the wiſdom of their anceſtors, and what was ſtill a better teſt, and better criterion of true policy, all that the experience of the nation had diſcovered to have been the effect of miſchief from the relaxation, and of benefit from the continuance of this ſyſtem; they have uniformly preſerved in the ſame conſtant maxim, to keep the wool of Great Britain at home, to encourage the manufacture of it at home, as the native commodity of the kingdom, and the baſis of all its trade and commerce. Need I refer your Lordſhips to any private authority upon this ſubject. Undoubtedly there are not wanting great names oppoſed to any that can be ſtated, if private opinion is to be reſorted to, on the other ſide: but I do not avail myſelf of the opinions of Doctor Campbell, my Lord Hale, or my Lord Bacon. I ſtand upon what is better entitled to your Lordſhips attention, the great repoſitory of the nation's wiſdom, recorded in the ſtatutes of the kingdom. Your Lordſhips know, that ſo early as the reign of Edward the Firſt, one of the wiſeſt princes, as Lord Hale ſtates, that ever ruled this kingdom, a proclamation iſſued to prohibit the export of wool, in order to reſcue from the hands of foreigners,

reigners, the woollen trade, that was at that time, from a contrary practice, falling into them, and to endeavour, if poſſible, to reſtore this valuable trade to the flouriſhing ſtate in which it had exiſted in the reigns of Henry the Second and Richard the Firſt. The neceſſity of the times, I admit, procured a temporary relaxation of this ſalutary policy, in order to procure a revenue upon the grant of licences for the exportation of wool. But what was the conſequence?—The immediate decline of the trade of this country, and a transfer of it to foreign nations; the invariable conſequence whenever this miſchievous traffic was permitted. Your Lordſhips know, how in a later period, this contributed in part, to enhance the dreadful troubles in which this country was involved.—The hiſtorians ſtate, that when for the ſake of the ſubſidy, improvidently granted to James the Firſt, the export of wool was permitted, the conſequences were, that trade languiſhed, the induſtrious manufacturer migrated to another country, and thoſe who were out of employ ſtaid at home and contributed mainly to the dreadful troubles which enſued: it was ſoon found neceſſary from dear-bought experience, to reſtore the ancient policy, and accordingly the prohibition of the exportation of wool, made one of the firſt acts of the reſtoration, a wiſe and popular

pular act, the 12th of Charles the Second.—My Lords, the great men who reſtored the monarch to his throne, who, at the ſame period, provided for the naval ſtrength of the kingdom, by the important act of navigation which laid the baſis of our maritime and commercial power and wealth, with the ſame provident wiſdom, eſtabliſhed the reſtoration of the internal trade and manufactures of the kingdom, by reviving the prohibition on the export of wool. The grounds of this meaſure are ſtated in the preamble of the act "For the better preventing the loſſes and inconveniencies which have happened by and through the ſecret and ſubtile exportation of wool out of the kingdom, and for the better ſetting to work the poor people and inhabitants of the kingdom, and to the intent, that the full and beſt uſe and benefit of the principal native commodities of the kingdom, may redound to, and be unto and amongſt the ſubjects and inhabitants of the kingdom, and not unto any foreign realms or ſtates." In another act the export of wool is ſtated to be productive "of the great decay of the woollen manufactures, the ruin of many families, and the deſtruction of the navigation and commerce of the kingdom."

It ſhould ſeem hardly neceſſary that ſo plain and ſelf-evident a propoſition ſhould require any

any authority in ſupport of it; undoubtedly it cannot but be wiſer and better, if the object can be accompliſhed, to work up the wool into manufacture producing three times its original value, and giving employment to a numerous body of induſtrious ſubjects, than to export it abroad in a raw ſtate, even at an advanced price. It ſeems to be a ſelf-evident propoſition, and not one that can be juſtly branded with the imputation of being ſuggeſted by the narrow-minded or covetous diſpoſition of thoſe who are engaged in the manufacture. It might rather be called a narrow-minded policy to endeavour to export it for the ſake of a little mercenary advantage in the ſale, in oppoſition not only to the true intereſt and advantage of the kingdom, but alſo as the exporter would ſee if he were not a narrow-minded perſon, in oppoſition to his own individual intereſts, in the effect produced on the value of his ſheep, of his land, and of all its produce by the proſperity or decline of the manufacture, in proportion as the wool is exported abroad, or worked up at home. Halifax, and the neighbouring towns, it has been well obſerved, have clothed the hills of Lincolnſhire. The manufacture is therefore entitled to protection upon the moſt enlarged principles, and the legiſlature has conſidered the infraction of this policy not

on the footing merely of illicit trade, but as a crime againſt the ſtate. They have declared that thoſe who endeavoured to contravene the policy of the country, and export its wool abroad to the great loſs of the community and every individual in it, deſerve to be branded with the imputation, and ſubjected to the puniſhment even of felons. Your Lordſhips know that at another memorable period after the execution of theſe laws had been relaxed, the ſame policy was reſumed at the Revolution. In the firſt year of William and Mary, an Act paſſed to render more effectual the prohibition of the export of wool. In the eleventh year of the ſame reign your Lordſhips know it was extended to Ireland with additional reſtrictions; and in the ſubſequent reigns of George I. and II. and even in the preſent reign, and down to the very recent period, has the ſame ſyſtem been continued. Your Lordſhips know that when this ſubject was a very few years ago under the conſideration of parliament, the neceſſity of enforcing the prohibition on the export of wool was fully eſtabliſhed, and an Act paſſed in the 28th of the king for the conſolidation of all the former laws on this ſubject into one, with additional penalties and reſtrictions, ſuch as the nature of the ſubject rendered neceſſary, for more effectually keeping the wool at home.

Surely

Surely then after ſuch a ſeries of acts for ſo long a period, it will hardly be ſaid that this is a narrow-minded policy, an odious monopoly, or that any individual will think himſelf competent to call in queſtion the wiſdom of the legiſlature ſo ſtrongly and repeatedly declared on the general queſtion of retaining at home the wool grown in the kingdom for the employment of its own manufactures. But ſuppoſing the policy in any antecedent period to have been queſtionable, before it was known whether the object of that policy could be completely obtained, yet did any perſon ever doubt the propriety of that policy, if happily ſuch a ſtate of things were arrived, as is accompliſhed at this day. If it ſhould be found that all the wool of the country could be worked up into manufactures at home, did any man ever doubt that then it would become a wiſe policy not to ſuffer a ſingle pound of it to be exported.

What is the period then at which it is now propoſed to aboliſh *in toto* all the antecedent reſtrictions upon this ſubject as far as reſpects Ireland, and to permit the unlimited export of it to that country? it is a period when undoubtedly if no law had ever paſſed before on the ſubject, yet upon the obvious principle

that you are to keep at home, *that* which you want at home, *that* which you uſe at home, *that* which is valuable at home, upon the very ſame principle that regulates the export and import of every other commodity, you would have been particularly called upon at this period of time to prohibit the export of this commodity. The crying neceſſity of the times, the actual ſcarcity experienced, the inadequacy of the ſupply to the home manufacture, would have loudly called upon you to have impoſed a prohibition, if none had ever exiſted before.

Upon this ſubject your Lordſhips have the evidence of no leſs than eleven or twelve witneſſes, who upon their oaths have ſtated what is the preſent ſtate of the demand for and ſupply of this commodity in the market: and however lightly they may be treated with reſpect to underſtanding, and they do not preſume to arrogate to themſelves any great degree of extenſive general knowledge, (though they are undoubtedly a keen and intelligent ſet of men) they require only credit for common veracity and common honour, in ſpeaking to facts within their own knowledge. I am not now going to inquire into the cauſes of the ſcarcity of wool, but the fact of the ſcarcity is proved by all the witneſſes to exiſt within their own certain knowledge

knowledge. That there has been a continuing ſcarcity, no matter from what cauſe, whether from an increaſed demand, or a decreaſed ſupply, experienced ever ſince the year 1793, and gradually increaſing to a conſiderable degree; that this is in fact experienced by the trade in every way in which ſcarcity can be diſcovered—unleſs your Lordſhips are to reject *in toto*, the evidence of theſe reſpectable gentlemen who have ſworn to their own knowledge to that which has paſſed under their own obſervation, and that too without any evidence to the contrary, your Lordſhips muſt take this as an undoubted fact.

My Lords, they ſwear that in conſequence of this ſcarcity, they have been obliged to reject ſome of the orders they have received from abroad. That they have been under the neceſſity of ſending to different places for the purpoſe of obtaining a ſupply to which they did not uſually reſort. One gentleman tells you that endeavouring to obtain his uſual ſupply from Northumberland and the borders of Scotland, he could obtain none; that coming up to London to be ſupplied with two or three hundred packs of fine wool, he could only obtain ſeventy. Another ſpeaks of his agents riding forty miles, and not being able to obtain an ounce of wool. Let it not be ſaid

this is the caſe in one or two counties only; we have examined witneſſes, one of whom has gone through thirty-two counties, beſides Scotland and Wales; another through thirteen, and different witneſſes from every quarter of the kingdom uniformly concur in the reſult, that their correſpondents in every part declare that at this time they cannot get the quantity of wool they want, that if they had more they could work it up, and in conſequence of the inadequacy of the ſupply they have been under the neceſſity of rejecting many orders they had received, ſome of which are entirely loſt, and others poſtponed; and at this moment they know not where to obtain the commodity they want. Is this a period for the firſt time of encouraging the export of this commodity?

My Lords, theſe are men of plain underſtanding, but they cannot comprehend how it can poſſibly be wiſe in a period like this to export a commodity already inadequate to domeſtic uſe; to encourage the export to any place of that very commodity which is productive of ſuch invaluable effects here, and which at this time we find actually to be inſufficient for the purpoſes for which it is wanted. Does this ariſe from any temporary cauſes? the witneſſes have all, as far as they are able to judge upon the ſubject, declared the contrary; whatever

whatever be the cauſe, whether it ariſes from an increaſed demand, or from a decreaſed ſupply, is there any proſpect of either of theſe cauſes operating in future in a different way. With reſpect to the demand, they ſtate they have every reaſon to believe that it will rather be increaſed than diminiſhed; for, in the event of a different ſtate of things, on the return of peace, though it may in ſome caſes operate to abridge the demand, yet that it will in others open new markets, and in the whole probably increaſe the demand of this commodity both at home and abroad. There is no proſpect therefore that if the petitioners are permitted to retain the commodity, and to work it up into manufactures, the demand will be reduced. As to the ſupply, there is in point of fact at this moment experienced a leſs ſupply than there uſed to be; the ſame cauſes are likely to produce the ſame effects, and in a greater degree. Upon this ſubject, I am aware that much is open to ſpeculation and conjecture, whether or not from the cauſes that have been ſtated, upon a review of the progreſs made in the agriculture in this country, the reſult is, that there is at this time actually more or leſs wool produced than there uſed to be. Your Lordſhips know that all the writers who have be-

ſtowed their attention to this particular ſubject of the growth of wool, agree, that there are two principal modes by which the growth of wool in any country can be improved, that is to ſay, by improving the breed of ſheep, or by an attention to the paſture, added to the circumſtance of management and attention to the care of the animal. With reſpect to the paſture they all agree that the wilder, leſs cultivated paſture, the wild open downs, the more extenſive range the animal has to walk for his food, improve the fleece; render it not more abundant, I admit, but finer and fitter to produce the ſhort clothing wool.

Now let any body, in a general point of view, look round the country, and ſtate whether of late years there has been an increaſe of that ſort of paſture, or a diminution of it.—Does not every body know that within the period of this preſent reign, there are computed to have been no leſs than a million of acres incloſed. I know that ſome part of this was before in the ſtate of arable land, open common fields, and that ſince the incloſure, part being continued in arable and part converted into paſture, it may yield more paſture, but not that ſort of paſture which is moſt favorable for the growth of wool; for old open fields incloſed and fertilized by the preſent ſyſtem of agriculture,

agriculture, would not contribute to the amelioration of the article of wool. And the inclosing, improving, and converting into arable, in part at leaſt, of large tracts of open waſtes, extenſive wide ranges of uncultivated heaths and commons, is a conſiderable drawback on the other ſide, as to quantity as well as quality of paſture. Upon the total reſult the witneſſes tell you that in their own experience they have obſerved a very conſiderable diminution both in the quantity and quality of wool ariſing from theſe cauſes. Whether their judgment is well or ill founded upon this ſubject, it is not pretended to be matter of the ſame certainty with the other facts they have ſtated. It is ſubmitted to your Lordſhips ſuperior judgment and ſuperior knowledge, how far the theory is well founded; how far by any practicable methods the growth and the quality of wool may be improved, conſiſtently with the other wants of the kingdom;—if you could dictate to the farmer the mode by which he ſhould cultivate his lands, you may perhaps increaſe the quantity, but it is much doubted whether you can improve the quality, unleſs by the improvement of the breed, and then again not without great attention to the paſture. Is it likely that there will be any favorable change in theſe reſpects, ſo as to yield a larger ſupply in future either of the

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finer or the coarſer wool? I ſubmit there is every reaſonable probability of the contrary: that from the ſame progreſs in agricultural improvement, which the wants and neceſſities of the times and an increaſing population call loudly for, in the cultivation of land, with a view to the growth of corn and the breeding of larger ſheep and cattle for food, nobody can reaſonably hope that there will ariſe any conſiderable change in favor of the growers and conſumers of wool, by which either a larger quantity will be produced in future, or the quality of it be improved.—But what is ſtated upon this ſubject is matter of theoretical ſpeculation; at beſt it is matter merely of conjecture on one ſide and the other: what is likely to be the reſult in future no one can ſtate with any degree of certainty. Give me leave, my Lords, with all ſubmiſſion, to aſk your Lordſhips, whether any wiſe man would venture to act in an important meaſure upon a conjecture of what is likely to be in future? will he not think it ſafeſt and wiſeſt to act upon the preſent ſtate of things? much more when he conſiders the little there is of probability that the growth of this article or the demand for it is likely to be materially altered, or if it is, the greater probability there is that all things conſidered the quantity of this raw material will be rather

reduced

reduced than augmented, and the demand in future rather increaſed than diminiſhed. I know it has been ſaid that the quantity of ſupply will always keep pace with the quantity of demand, and that in fact the ſcarcity that is now experienced is owing to the great increaſe of the manufacture. My Lords, with great ſubmiſſion, I believe there is ſome little fallacy in conſidering the caſe even in that point of view. That there is ſome increaſe of the manufacture I hope and truſt and believe, but that there is not that increaſe which a view of one particular document would ſeem to preſent, I am afraid is certainly the caſe; becauſe though there unqueſtionably is a great increaſe in the Weſtern Riding of Yorkſhire in the manufacture, yet if your Lordſhips are to take that as a criterion throughout the kingdom of an augmentation in the ſame proportion, I am afraid the concluſion would not entirely be warranted to that extent.—For your Lordſhips have heard at your bar ſome witneſſes who ſpeak to the contrary being the caſe at other places, namely that at Lavenham, Bocking, and other places there is a conſiderable decline, and that the trade has travelled from them into Yorkſhire.

In addition to this, when an increaſe in one branch of the woollen manufacture is aſſumed, as proof of the increaſe of the growth or ſupply

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of wool, we are to take into conſideration another important ſubject, namely, if there be an increaſe in one ſort of manufacture, how much of diminution there is in another. A conſiderable part of the wool of this country was formerly uſed in female attire.—Your Lordſhips know how much that has been ſupplanted by the cotton manufactures.—This has therefore ſhut out that ſource of conſumption, and therefore in calculating the total quantity of the growth of wool actually applied to the purpoſes of manufacture as it is carried on now, and as it was formerly, though it preſents in exportable articles an increaſe, though there appears to be an increaſe in the fine cloth in the Weſt Riding of Yorkſhire, which is all that is comprehended within the return for that diſtrict (the ſtamped articles only which are of the finer ſort being included in it) from whence your Lordſhips would be led to ſuppoſe a conſiderable increaſe in the actual ſupply of the article of wool; yet that muſt be received with grains of allowance. But ſuppoſing there were a general increaſe in the manufacture, is that neceſſarily to be attributed to an increaſe in the actual produce of wool in the country?—Every body knows, who has read the returns of the exports and imports of the kingdom, that it is in part to be attributed to another diſtinct

cauſe,

cauſe, namely, to a conſiderable augmented importation of foreign wool. Is it not notorious that within the laſt few years the importation of Spaniſh wool has greatly increaſed? In a former year, I think, we imported 14,000 bags—it is now raiſed to 28,000, double the quantity it uſed to be. The average value of the import from Spain now exceeds £621,000, this is an acceſſion of fine wool, and accounts in a great meaſure for the increaſed manufacture of fine cloths, it being principally uſed for that purpoſe.—In addition to which your Lordſhips know that from another country there is imported wool, which uſed formerly not to yield any to us—I mean from Portugal. Theſe are ſources of ſupply to be taken into the account, when we conſider whether the increaſe of the manufacture neceſſarily implies an increaſe of the ſupply. But we find from the general return that was made in the year 1740, to the Treaſury, the total amount of wool at that period was repreſented to be 738,000 packs grown in the country; the total quantity now grown, according to any mode of calculating it, is 600,000 only. When this ſubject was under the conſideration of the two houſes of parliament in the year 1788, that was admitted on all ſides to be a fair repreſentation of the total growth of the kingdom at that time, and it is

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confirmed by witneſſes who have been examined at your Lordſhips bar upon oath, who ſtate, they verily believe it to be now the total quantity of the growth of the kingdom: if that be ſo, there has been in fact a conſiderable decreaſe, and this comparative ſtatement, added to the general hiſtory of the agriculture of the country and its effects, and the other circumſtances before mentioned, ſeem to preſent reaſonable grounds to your Lordſhips, as far as this is to be the baſis of argument or of action, to infer that the actual growth of wool in the country, conſidered by itſelf, is not ſo great as it was formerly, and that it is not likely in future to be increaſed. But waving this queſtion entirely, and without referring to cauſes, whatever be the cauſe I ſtand upon the fact of the actual ſcarcity; that fact cannot be controverted—ſcarcity is a relative term; we mean by it when there is not ſufficient for the demand: if that demand is likely to continue, I ſay there is, as applied to this country conſidered by itſelf, an actual ſcarcity of the commodity you propoſe to export. This it is which the manufacturers complain of, and without enquiring whether it is referrable to one caſe or the other, or the joint effect of both, which is probably the caſe; but the fact depoſed to at your Lordſhips bar, that a ſcarcity has been experienced in every

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way in which it can be aſcertained, for ſeveral years back, and that the ſtock the manufacturers now have in hand, is ſo ſmall, that they will have worked the whole of it up four months ſooner than uſual; that they do not believe their ſtock will laſt longer than July, and that they do not know where to get an additional ſupply for their neceſſities. Theſe facts, I ſay, if not contradicted, are deciſive againſt the juſtice and policy of exportation. The country cannot, without loſs, afford to export it anywhere; therefore the Petitioners entreat your Lordſhips, not to permit the export, now for the firſt time. They deprecate it, on account of what has been proved to be the ſituation of the trade, by the concurrent teſtimony of all concerned in it, that at this moment every ounce of wool that can be procured, is actually worked up into manufacture, and that the total quantity has been, and is every where indiſputably unequal to the demand.

Give me leave, my Lords, next to enquire, whether there is any proſpect that can ſafely be relied upon, of deriving the ſources of ſupply from any other quarter? We have been told that even if the quantity of Britiſh wool ſhould not be increaſed, there will be an ample ſupply ruſhing in from other countries: from whence, I would beg leave to aſk, is this boaſted quantity of foreign

ſupply

ſupply likely to be furniſhed?—Not to mention how lamentable a thing it would be, for this country to depend upon a foreign ſupply, for the material of one of its principal manufactures, conſtituting now between a third and a fourth of the exports of the kingdom; let any perſon converſant with the country from whence the largeſt portion of foreign wool is now derived, ſtate, whether there is any rational ground to hope that the ſource of ſupply from that country is likely to be increaſed—is it likely to be increaſed by any alteration in the internal ſtate of that country, or by the diminution of any other external demand upon it for this commodity? Is there any perſon converſant with the preſent ſituation of Spain, who does not know that in both reſpects the very reverſe is to be apprehended; that, as it has been recently ſtated by an intelligent traveller, the people there are turning their attention to manufactures; that in the neighbourhood of Barcelona they have fourteen Mancheſter machines at work, which they have adopted in conſequence of a model tranſported there from this country in the year 1785; that the large exportation of wool is at this moment the ſubject of national complaint and jealouſy; that they are alive to the miſchief produced by the impolitic ſacrifice made both of manufacture and agriculture to the

the cultivation of this article. Hitherto their wool has certainly been a ſubject to which great private attention is paid: the carcaſe there is of very inferior value, the fleſh of their ſheep being little better than carrion, as I think ſome writers upon the ſubject ſtate. The country in this reſpect, has remained in that early ſtate of civilization in which we find the ſkin of the animal more attended to than the carcaſe; but in the progreſs of improvement the converſe takes place. As ſoon as Spain ſhall open its eyes to the improvement of the country, the oppoſite ſyſtem will be adopted, and there certainly is reaſon to imagine it ſoon will, when it is conſidered that within a few years there has been ſuppoſed to be an increaſe in that country of no leſs than two millions of people, and that in the year 1740, a gentleman was actually invited from this country with an offer of a penſion of £. 500 a year for the very purpoſe of eſtabliſhing the woollen manufactory in Spain. I beg to aſk your Lordſhips whether in this ſtate of things there is any rational hope, upon which a wiſe ſtateſman would venture to act, that we are likely to obtain an increaſe of the import of wool from that country?—Is there not rather danger to be apprehended that the ſupply from that country will, from the operation of theſe cauſes, be diminiſhed. Permit me next to conſi-

der the external demand on Spain from foreign countries for this commodity, whether it is likely to diminiſh or increaſe the ſupply from that country to this?—At preſent, happily for us, Great Britain is the principal cuſtomer for all the wool exported from that country, owing to the lamentable condition of foreign countries who are engaged in the manufacture of war inſtead of goods, and who therefore are not in a ſituation to draw their uſual ſupply of wool from thence, and conſequently leave it to be wholly engroſſed by the manufacture of Great Britain. But can we rationally hope that this will always be the caſe?—Will the return of peace, when it is reſtored to all Europe, bring no return of manufactures to foreign countries?—Will not the trade in part run into thoſe channels, and an increaſed or revived demand for this article, from thoſe countries, diminiſh the quantity of wool to be exported to this, even ſuppoſing Spain ſhould continue to grow and to permit as large a quantity to be exported as they do at this day? I take the liberty, with great humility, of ſubmitting theſe conſiderations to your Lordſhips ſuperior wiſdom and judgment, who have infinitely better means of knowledge upon all theſe ſubjects, as the grounds upon which the Petitioners humbly preſume to think they have juſt cauſe to apprehend danger to

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their manufactures from the meaſure in queſtion; and to ſtate that they cannot, under all the circumſtances, derive any rational proſpect of relief to their neceſſities, from a future augmented ſupply of wool from Spain.

Is there any proſpect then, of deriving ſupply from Ireland? I have heard it ſaid, that this is to be a fertile ſource of future ſupply: the Siſter Kingdom will ſend you wool, much or more than ſhe will receive from you. I beg leave to ſtate the apprehenſions of the Petitioners, that this will alſo be found to be a viſionary and fallacious ground of reliance. If the hope of deriving ſupply from Ireland is to be the ground upon which this meaſure is to be adopted; it ſhould be ſhewn how this is to be effected, and an alteration in the agriculture of Ireland brought about for this purpoſe. I beg leave to aſk of your Lordſhips too, whether it be moſt reaſonable, that the manufacturers of Ireland ſhould depend upon the future ſupply of Ireland, if ſuch a ſupply can be obtained, or that the manufacturers of Great Britain ſhould reſt a precarious hope upon the uncertainty of what hereafter may be produced from thence. The manufacturers of Great Britain have no objection that each country ſhould be allowed excluſively to retain and work up its own raw material. That the wool of Ireland ſhould

be confined to Ireland, and the wool of Great Britain be confined to Great Britain. If Ireland can employ the whole of its wool, if it can hereafter increaſe the quantity, let Ireland have the full benefit of its whole produce, but the manufacturers of Great Britain, with great humility, ſubmit to your Lordſhips, that it is unreaſonable to compel them to embark their capital, and to reſt the ſupport of their trade upon the precarious hope, which may or may not be realized, of a ſupply from the future expected growth of another country. The people of Ireland can better afford to truſt to that precarious hope, becauſe they have not yet got any other. It is a reaſonable and a natural thing that each country ſhould be allowed to conſume what each wants of its own produce; and therefore if there be a hope of future ſupply, let Ireland have all the benefit of it.

But your Lordſhips will give me leave to examine ſhortly, whether there is any reaſonable ground to believe that there will be an augmented ſupply from an increaſed growth of wool in Ireland. Are there not other objects to call for the full improvement of the agriculture of Ireland? Are there not other paramount objects of attention? The linen manufacture for inſtance, and the growth of cattle for ſupplying proviſions, which are exported to

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a very conſiderable amount from time to time, and various other modes in which the lands of that country are and will be employed to more profitable purpoſes than they could be by being directed ſolely to the production of wool? What reaſonable ground is there to expect any increaſed cultivation of that article? Have the people of Ireland, up to this period of time, in fact, applied their attention to it in ſuch a way, as to induce any rational perſon to build on the expectation that they will in future apply their minds to the growth of this raw material, if they can be ſupplied with it from Great Britain? Whether the climate and ſoil of Ireland be equally favourable? Whether the wool of Great Britain, which we know is coveted by all nations, be not preferable to the wool grown any where elſe, not excepting Ireland, is a queſtion upon which many wiſe men have thought in the affirmative. But ſurely at all events this is a matter of uncertainty, and as ſuch ought not to be made the baſis of any important meaſure, much leſs of one that is to be permanent. If the period ever ſhould arrive when Ireland is able to yield a conſiderable augmented produce, that will be the period for the Imperial Parliament of this country, if it be competent, if its judgment be not unalterably fixed before, to make arrangements ac-

cording to circumſtances. What will a wiſe man do in ſuch a caſe,—he will leave the ſubject open for future regulation. Do not, my Lords, therefore, we entreat you, cramp yourſelves. Do not put on the adamantine chains, by which you will be bound and fettered for ever.

As the growth of wool in one country or another may become greater or leſs; as the demand for it may vary, you may, if you are left free, adopt, according to the change of times, whatever policy is beſt adapted to the ſubject. This is the mode of acting which would naturally be expected to be ſuggeſted from looking forward to futurity, and indulging a ſpeculation reſpecting this article. I ſhould hope, therefore, that taking the ſubject in this point of view, your Lordſhips would be of opinion we had ſtated ſufficient grounds to induce you to forbear coming to an immediate and final deciſion upon the ſubject, and ſtill more to avoid the immediate adoption of the raſh and dangerous innovation propoſed of an irrevocable ſurrender of the wool of Great Britain. Another ground of hope held out in favor of the propoſed meaſure, has been, that it will not produce the effect which we have ſtated. It is ſaid our fears are vain, our apprehenſions viſionary. Ireland is not likely to poſſeſs herſelf of our wool, when the prohibition upon

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the export is taken off. I beg leave to ſtate, that if that prediction were well founded, it would ſtill form but a poor argument in favour of the meaſure. That the only or the principal recommendation of it, is a hope of its inefficacy, that when adopted it will be productive of no conſequences, at leaſt not its natural conſequences. You are deſired to allow an export, from an aſſurance that when allowed no export will follow. If there is no rational ground of expectation that Ireland will import our wool, why then is it to be an article of the Union that Ireland ſhould be allowed to import it? Could it not eaſily have been made matter of different regulation? What neceſſity for tying yourſelves down for ever to permit the exportation to Ireland, if Ireland is not in a ſtate likely to want it? No injury is done to Ireland by withholding the exportation of what ſhe will not uſe. If this argument is well founded in fact, it is deciſive that Ireland could not complain, if wool ſhould be claſſed at the end of the ſixth article of the Union, among thoſe articles of the growth and produce of this country, which are not to be exported into that without the ſanction of the Imperial parliament.

But is this again a ſolid and ſure ground of dependance? Is there a reaſonable proſpect that Ireland will not avail itſelf of this valuable

boon? Is not the raw material of Great Britain held out to them as a moſt valuable boon, from which they are likely to attain immediate and extenſive advantages. Looking at the paſt hiſtory of the woollen manufacture of Ireland, who will venture to propheſy that Ireland will not hereafter avail itſelf of the wool of England, if the export ſhould be allowed?

My Lords, I beg to call your Lordſhips' recollection to that hiſtory; I ſhall ſtate it very ſhortly: Your Lordſhips know there was a period of time not very far diſtant, when Ireland was a competitor with England, in the woollen manufacture. Your Lordſhips know that it called forth the legiſlative interpoſition of this country to cramp the rival, to reſtrain the competitor, and to confine the benefits of the woollen manufacture to this country. I do not mean to ſtate the act with commendation; but only to urge it as a proof that at that period Ireland was advancing in the woollen manufacture, ſo as to create alarm in Great Britain of rivalſhip in foreign markets, and therefore the ſtatute of King William was paſſed to prevent the competition, and prohibit the export of Iriſh woollens abroad. Surely this is ſufficient to ſhew the idea is not altogether viſionary, that the woollen manufacture may be carried on in the ſiſter kingdom. Why

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it ſhould not have been carried on in any great extent from that time till a late act of parliament took off the reſtriction, is eaſily accounted, for ſo long as they were debarred from the foreign market, it is not to be ſuppoſed that this article of manufacture would be greatly cultivated; a principal ſtimulus to the Iriſh adventurer in the woollen manufacture was wanting, the Iriſh manufacturer being precluded from a foreign market, and excluded from the poſſeſſion of the raw material grown in Great Britain. But who will venture to argue from thence, that the Iriſh nation will not again take up the woollen manufactures, when both theſe obſtacles are removed? When the foreign market is open to him equally with the Britiſh merchant, and the raw material of Great Britain open to him equally with the Engliſh manufacturers; who can pretend to ſay that with theſe advantages, he may not become again a formidable rival to the manufacturer of Great Britain? The article of ratteens, Dr. Campbel, in his Poltical Survey, ſtates, was at that day manufactured to great perfection at Carrick. We know the Iriſh are actually at this time working up the greateſt part of the wool of the country in the total ſupply of their army and militia. We know that at this time the total amount in value of Iriſh wool imported

ported into this country, is reduced to no more I think than ninety-two pounds ſterling. Is there not then reaſon to believe that the Iriſh adventurer may take up this article of manufacture, when he is encouraged to it by all the inducements which the Union, in addition to the poſſeſſion of the raw material of Great Britain, will hold out?

If this were deemed probable from mere general reaſoning, or general ſpeculation before, ſurely it has now received a moſt formidable acceſſion of ſtrength, ſo as to affright the ſtouteſt mind, from the evidence given in this houſe laſt night. I allude to the teſtimony of the witneſs who has recently arrived from Ireland, and who therefore could not be examined in the other Houſe of Parliament; who, after ten weeks reſidence in Ireland, has given your Lordſhips the reſult of his own perſonal obſervations. He has told your Lordſhips, that he ſaw with his own eyes in the neighbourhood of Cork, a large and extenſive manufactory, erected within the laſt ſix or ſeven years, for the purpoſe of carrying on the woollen manufacture, equal in extent and goodneſs in the conſtruction of it to any manufactory in this country; adopting all the modern improvements in the trade, capable of being worked by water, advantageouſly ſituated, and

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ſuperior in many reſpects to any works of a ſimilar nature exiſting in Great Britain. Can it then be ſaid that our apprehenſions are altogether viſionary, that the woollen manufacture if the export of wool be allowed, will be ſet up in Ireland? Can it be ſaid that this is a mere groundleſs alarm of intereſted men? when before an Union was in contemplation, even when the prohibition upon the export of the raw material exiſted, when the Iriſh were not in the ſtate in any reſpect which it is now propoſed to put them; an adventurer did erect a very extenſive building, for the purpoſe of carrying on the woollen manufacture? Does not that afford ſufficient ground to believe, that with a better protected country, with a better protected trade, with all the ſtimulus and encouragements, which will ariſe from the great meaſure now in contemplation, that theſe projects which were in contemplation before, will go on in an augmented ratio, that they will increaſe not only in the neighbourhood of Dublin, where the witneſs ſtated them to be alſo forming, but throughout all Ireland, if by any poſſibility Great Britain ſhould be induced to do that which even the moſt ſanguine Iriſhman did not imagine it was poſſible ever to perſuade this country to do, nameſy, conſent to export its raw material—its wool. If this could

could be effectuated, there is no doubt there are numbers ready inſtantly to ſet up the manufacture in that country.

But it is ſaid, Let them ſet it up, the Engliſh manufacturers have nothing to fear, they will be unequal competitors; for you are in poſſeſſion of the trade, you have capital, you have cuſtomers, you have eſtabliſhed manufactures, and long will be the time before they are put upon a ſimilar footing, or can in any reſpect ſtand a competition with yourſelves. I admit that there is weight in that argument, that it will for a time operate in favour of Great Britain; but, my Lords, conſider on the other hand, that Britiſh capital is not chained to this country, it may be eaſily transferred by any perſon who finds it his intereſt to carry on the trade in both countries, or to ſettle any of his relations or dependants in manufactures in Ireland. With reſpect to eſtabliſhed manufactories, they are of eaſy tranſit. The machinery affords an eaſy mode of transferring a manufacture from one country to another, and manufactories could be erected in a much ſhorter period of time than they could ſome years back. With reſpect to comparative advantages, there are ſome in favour of Great Britain, ſuch as the eaſy ſupply of fuel; but is not cheapneſs of labour, is not cheapneſs of living, is not exemption

emption from heavy taxes, is not the advantage of eaſy export to a foreign market, at a much leſs freight, by a much more ſpeedy conveyance, enabling them to reach the foreign market much earlier than the Britiſh merchant can, of the higheſt importance? Do not theſe conſiderations operate to invite the manufacturer there, or at leaſt to carry from Great Britain a part of the manufacture which ſhe now enjoys?

I beg with great humility to ſtate theſe conſiderations to your Lordſhips, for the purpoſe of ſhewing that the fears of the petitioners are not altogether ſo viſionary and ſo ridiculous as they are ſometimes ſuppoſed to be, ſo light as to lie reſting upon no grounds. I ſubmit them as proper to be entertained by a wiſe and conſiderate mind, looking at the two countries, and upon all the probabilities of the ſubject, (and on both ſides we are only reaſoning upon probabilities) that there is reaſonable ground to apprehend, that if the meaſure is adopted in the manner and to the extent it is propoſed to be, that it will not be fruitleſs, but that there will be an exportation of wool to a conſiderable amount. That it will not be, as contended for, an inoperative and inefficacious meaſure, but will have its natural and propoſed effect, that the allowance of an export will be followed

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by exportation; and in the degree that it is followed by exportation, even if it does not produce rival manufactures, yet for whatever purpose the wool of Great Britain is carried to Ireland to that degree, it will lessen the quantum of manufacture in Great Britain.

A witness has positively sworn, that the price of wool in Ireland exceeds the price of wool of a similar quantity in this country, and has done so for some years back. Is it not then probable that the Irish manufacturer will visit the English market, for the purpose of being supplied with a commodity he can obtain cheaper here than at home? It can therefore surely not be stated that there are not solid grounds to apprehend, that should the free exportation of wool be allowed, there will arise from thence a very considerable diminution in this country, of that, of which there is at present too little. But admitting such to be the consequences of allowing the export of wool to Ireland, still it is contended the measure is justifiable on another ground, viz. the right which Ireland will have in future to be considered as standing on the same footing, and entitled to the same privileges and rights as any county in England.

After the Union has taken place, and Ireland

land and England are one, it is argued to be a narrow-minded jealouſy, and an intereſted policy to be fearful of giving advantages to Ireland, even to our own loſs.—Happy would it be for the empire if that country ſhould be ameliorated by the acceſſion of new manufactures, raiſed and fed by ſupplies from Great Britain. My Lords, I hope it will not be imputed to thoſe, for whom I appear, that they have acted a ſelfiſh or diſhonorable part upon this ſubject. It is not from any mean or ſelfiſh apprehenſions of the competition that they oppoſe this meaſure; it is not from any wiſh to prevent Ireland from enjoying what it ought to enjoy, the growth and produce of its own country, and every fair advantage which can be derived from working it up into manufactures. But it cannot ſurely be ſaid to be an unreaſonable requeſt on the part of the Britiſh manufacturer, that he ſhould not be forced to part with to another, that of which the entire uſe is wanted for himſelf, that which is eſſentially neceſſary for the exiſtence of his own manufacture.—Surely it is not unreaſonable to expect that he ought not individually to ſuffer, without compenſation, a heavy and grievous loſs; that his trade ought not to be made a ſacrifice for the benefit of Ireland.

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But, my Lords, let us examine a little further into the ſubject, and ſee whether the argument be well founded, that the Union does give to Ireland a right to claim an inſtant participation in all the benefits of trade and commerce equally with Great Britain. A compariſon has been made, which has, I am afraid, been productive of great fallacy in the reaſoning upon this ſubject. Our opponents have endeavored to aſſimilate Ireland after the Union takes place to an Engliſh county, and have contended that after that event we might as well propoſe to prohibit the export of wool from Somerſetſhire or Suſſex, into Northumberland or Yorkſhire as into Ireland. Give me leave, my Lords, to conſider how well this argument is founded.—Is this the plan upon which the articles of Union, now before your Lordſhips, are framed?—Does the Union of both countries for all purpoſes take place immediately? Is Ireland to be immediately identified with England, for the purpoſes of an equal participation of benefit, and an equal participation of burthen?—Is it not in many reſpects, for a time at leaſt, directly the reverſe?

My Lords, conſider firſt what will be the inequality for twenty years to come, the fixed inequality

equality in the ratio of contributions by each country, to the general expences of the empire, founded on an eſtimate of their relative abilities, in the proportion of fifteen to two in favor of Ireland.—Is that the caſe with any county of Great Britain?—Does any county of Great Britain pay a proportional contribution only according to its wealth?—No. Then any county of Great Britain and Ireland do not in this reſpect ſtand upon the ſame footing, nor ought, during the continuance of this inequality, to be conſidered as intitled equally to the ſame privileges, becauſe it is not reaſonable to treat them as one and the ſame, for the purpoſe of benefit, when they are not to be ſo for the purpoſe of burthen. It may be ſaid, Oh, but this is the relative ability.—Ireland cannot ſupport a heavier contribution. We tax Ireland in the proportion it is able to bear. I do not mean to queſtion that,—I have no doubt the relative ability is wiſely, juſtly, and rightly calculated.—All I mean to ſtate is, that ſo long as there is that diſproportion in contribution, ſo long is Ireland not treated as being one with England, nor conſtituting a part of it, it is a fallacy ſo to conſider Ireland; and therefore though it might not be juſt to refuſe to any county of Great Britain to participate equally in all the

produce of any other county, yet the argument does not hold, or apply to Ireland under theſe circumſtances.

Further, my Lords, if the ratio of contribution be calculated upon the preſent relative wealth of the two countries, let us conſider a moment how that preſſes againſt any transfer of that, which is the beſt ſource of wealth to England, which conſtitutes a chief part of that very ability upon which the calculation is founded, a transfer during that period of time, whilſt the proportion of fifteen to two is to continue, which deſtroys the baſis upon which the whole plan reſts. Is it juſt, is it reaſonable, to make Great Britain pay according to the quantum of manufacture which it enjoyed in the year 1799, reckoning upon a full entire unparticipated enjoyment of all its wool: is it fair to take that as a ground of computation, and then to adopt a meaſure that will gradually transfer a part of that very manufacture? Every pack of wool that goes out of the country, does deſtroy the relative ability between Great Britain and Ireland, in a double proportion, as it augments the ability of the one, and diminiſhes the ability of the other—and in proportion as this cauſe operates during this period of twenty years, ſo far it deſtroys the principle upon which

which the proportional contribution is founded. If therefore the argument of a compariſon of Ireland with a county of Great Britain be well-founded, the meaſure ought at leaſt to be poſtponed till Ireland ſtands in the predicament of being one for all purpoſes of burthen with England; it cannot at all events till then, with any juſtice or propriety, be made one for all purpoſes of benefit.

Again, my Lords, conſider other points, wherein the compariſon fails:—Is Ireland treated as one with England, with reſpect to any of the ſubjects of the ſeventh article of the union? It is therein propoſed, that there ſhall be in future protecting duties, to equalize the commodities exported from one country into the other?—Is there any ſuch arrangement between any one county of Great Britain and another? Did any body ever hear of protecting duties on the transfer of any articles, in proportion to the relative wealth or ability, or any of the criterions upon which that is determined, between the remoteſt corners of Wales and the Metropolis, or any other differently circumſtanced parts of England or Great Britain?—No, then we have here another point of view, in which, for a certain period of time at leaſt, the argument is not well-founded, which ſuppoſes Ireland put upon the ſame footing, by the arti-

cles of union, with a county of this kingdom. It is treated as a different kingdom, or at leaſt as differently circumſtanced for a time; and it is therefore propoſed, the growing manufactures of Ireland ſhould be guarded by protecting duties, to prevent their deſtruction by the introduction of commodities from this country. As long as that protection exiſts, it affords another argument againſt the claim of Ireland to an equal participation of benefit. In another reſpect Ireland is treated in the 1ſt article of union, as continuing a diſtinct country.

The ſurplus of revenue raiſed in Ireland over and above the proportional contribution of Ireland, is not to go into the general purſe of the ſtate, to be applied generally, like the contribution of every county in this kingdom, to all the burthens of the Empire, but is to be wholly, ſeparately, and excluſively applied to the benefit of Ireland. There again the ſeparate benefit of Ireland is provided for as a diſtinct country.—Is that the caſe with any county of Great Britain?—No.—In this reſpect therefore, there is and will continue to be after the union, a diſſimilitude between Ireland and a county of Great Britain. In many other points of view in which Ireland is conſidered in the articles of union, for purpoſes of burthen and making of regulations with reſpect to trade and commerce,

commerce, it is put upon a different footing with England.

At the close of the 7th article, there are certain enumerated articles, which are made matter of exception, and not to be comprehended within the general liberty of export from one country into the other—namely, corn, meal, biscuits, and flour; these articles are to be left open, as we trust your Lordships will leave the raw material of our manufacture, as being the growth and produce of each country, to the wisdom of the Imperial parliament to regulate, as circumstances shall from time to time render fitting.

The principle of this provision is, that when any article, the growth or produce of either country, is an article of prime necessity, and may be wholly wanted by either country, then that each country should have that preference in the separate and primary use of it, which nature has given to each; that the two countries, in such case, cannot be identified, but each must be kept distinct. My Lords, it is in that predicament we wish the wool of each country to be placed; that the growth and produce of each country should be confined to each, if in the judgment of the Imperial parliament the circumstances of each should create

a demand, in either, or both, for the whole of what each can produce.

But even if Ireland were immediately on the union, equally to participate in all the burthens of the ſtate, yet there is another point of view in which the queſtion may be conſidered, from which I ſubmit Ireland would not be entitled to claim the free export from Great Britain, of this particular article. In the uſe and enjoyment of its own wool, Great Britain is entitled, I conceive, to preference over Ireland—firſt, becauſe it is the growth and produce of its own ſoil: *cæteris paribus*, this alone gives a juſt ground of preference—it is the free gift of Providence to Great Britain. The ſuperiority of its wool is principally owing to the advantages ariſing from its climate and ſoil: Great Britain is therefore firſt entitled to enjoy it, and ought, if it has occaſion for the whole, to be permitted to retain it. But this is not all—there is another circumſtance of deciſive preference in favour of Great Britain; I mean the prior eſtabliſhment of a manufactory, raiſed and ſupported upon the baſis of the ſole and excluſive poſſeſſion of this article. Is not the difference moſt obvious, between taking away from one country a manufacture already eſtabliſhed in it, and creating a new one in another, where one does not yet exiſt? If any equal and impartial tribunal

tribunal fairly conſidered the ſtate of the two countries, to which would it ſay ought wool to be given, or by which ought it to be retained? ought not Great Britain to be allowed to retain an article, the whole of which is actually worked up into a moſt important and extenſive manufacture; upon which a veſted capital of ſix millions is employed; which at this moment actually yields to the ſtate ſo conſiderable a revenue; which forms ſo great a proportion of the annual exports of the kingdom; which employs ſo large a number of perſons, who muſt be thrown out of employment if the manufacture be removed from Great Britain? The condition of Great Britain will be altered if you take from Great Britain her wool, or any part of its manufacture. Not ſo with reſpect to Ireland. By allowing Great Britain to continue to enjoy, as ſhe now does excluſively, her own wool, the condition of Ireland will not be changed: ſhe will continue to apply herſelf to other manufactures; ſhe may extend the ſpirit of adventure to other ſubjects; a continuance of the prohibition on the export could not therefore operate with equal prejudice to Ireland, as the abolition of it would to Great Britain. The Weſt Riding of Yorkſhire, and

other places in which the manufactory flouriſhes, would, if it were withdrawn, be reduced to the miſerable ſtate to which Bocking and other places, from a ſimilar cauſe, have been ſhewn to be reduced; with augmented poor's rates, an induſtrious poor left out of employment, a large capital ſunk in works that have become in a great degree uſeleſs, the value of the land and all its produce proportionably diminiſhed, with all the other diſadvantages that unavoidably follow, when a manufacture is withdrawn from a country where it was once eſtabliſhed; ſuch will be the ſtate and condition of Great Britain, if there be any reduction of the manufacture eſtabliſhed in it. Upon this ground therefore, if there were no other, I hope your Lordſhips will think, that of the two competitors for the wool of Great Britain, Great Britain is entitled preferably to continue in the ſole excluſive enjoyment of her native commodity, which has hitherto been conſtantly ſecured to her by the wiſdom and juſtice of parliament.

My Lords, there is only one other point of view in which I would, with great ſubmiſſion, preſent this ſubject to your Lordſhips conſideration; and that is, the probability of the allowance of an export of Britiſh wool to Ireland, operating to produce the export of it to other countries.

countries.—This meaſure has uniformly been treated by our opponents merely as the means of ſupplying Ireland.—But, with great ſubmiſſion, I beg to ſtate what the Petitioners conceive to be a reaſonable ground of apprehenſion, that if you permit Britiſh wool to be exported to Ireland, you permit the export of it to every part of Europe. The time may arrive when it may become again a favorite object of foreign acquiſition, as your Lordſhips know it has been heretofore, and as was fully proved when the ſubject was under the conſideration of your Lordſhips and the other Houſe of Parliament, in the year 1788.—It was then eſtabliſhed in evidence, that there had been clandeſtinely exported from hence to France, no leſs than 13,000 packs of Britiſh wool a year, for the ſake of the advantage ariſing from working up the long combing wool of Great Britain in the proportion of one to three with the wool of France in their manufactures.—If France ever ſhould recover its trade and manufactures, or any other neighbouring country, to whom the wool of England is an object of acquiſition, no doubt they will endeavor to obtain the poſſeſſion of it,—ſurely then it is impoſſible not to ſee that permitting the export to Ireland will facilitate the export to other countries, both in its way to Ireland, and after it has

arrived

arrived there from the numerous bays and ports that ſurround every part of that iſland. We know that all the fleet of England has been found unequal to guard the coaſts of that country againſt a foreign enemy, even with the previous knowledge of its intended aggreſſion, ſo as to prevent an occaſional landing, notwithſtanding every exertion of the beſt ſkill and vigilance that human ability and foreſight could poſſibly uſe. How impoſſible will it then be for any effectual means to be uſed to ſurround that country by day and by night, ſo as to preclude all opportunity of veſſels eſcaping from different ports and creeks in that country, to export from thence whatever wool a foreign cuſtomer may require;—this I humbly ſtate as an additional ground to apprehend a future diminution of the quantity of Britiſh wool from the propoſed exportation.

Theſe, my Lords, are the grounds, very imperfectly detailed, of the apprehenſions entertained by the Petitioners. They hope they will at leaſt be deemed of ſufficient weight, not to procure from your Lordſhips an immediate deciſion, perpetuating for ever the prohibition or the export of wool, but only to prevent the immediate and irrevocable adoption of a contrary deciſion: from the alarming danger and magnitude of the queſtion, they

requeſt

requeſt your Lordſhips to pauſe, to poſtpone your determination upon it, not to bind yourſelves in a matter of at leaſt ſo much uncertainty and doubt, at once, without further examination or enquiry, to a ſyſtem of policy that you may hereafter repent of, and be unable to rectify. If the woollen manufacturers ſhould be expoſed by the adoption of this meaſure, to the loſſes and miſchiefs they apprehend; if the trade, manufacture, and commerce of Great Britain ſhould deeply ſuffer; if numbers of the induſtrious poor ſhould be thrown out of employment; if the poor rates ſhould be greatly augmented; if the landed intereſt ſhould fatally ſuffer in the reſult, no remedy would be left; if the export of wool ſhould be made an indiſſoluble article of Union, all your Lordſhips power of giving relief upon the ſubject would be for ever abandoned; upon this ground it is that we pray your Lordſhips, with preſſing importunity, but with great humility, to withhold the fatal vote.—We requeſt your Lordſhips, as our laſt hope, that you will ſtand by us in the hour of danger. It is not a light ſubject that is at ſtake.

The preſervation and exiſtence of the moſt ancient manufacture of Great Britain is threatened,—the great baſis, as my Lord Hale has ſaid,

ſaid, of all its commerce, which has ſtood by her for all ages, and afforded ſtrength, and vigour, and life to her exertions throughout all the viciſſitudes of times, in all our wars and all our exigencies. In the earlieſt periods of our hiſtory, this has been the pride and ſtrength of Great Britain.—It was the great reſource, by the help of which the three Edwards contended ſucceſsfully, againſt the power of France. It is ſtill the faithful protector and ſupport of the country in the preſent arduous conflict with the ſame inveterate enemy.—Do not, my Lords, withdraw your protection; maintain it as the beſt and ſureſt ſource of the wealth and ſtrength of Great Britain. It has been hitherto, in every age, and under every reign, the ruling policy, and the wiſdom of the legiſlature, to protect this native commodity and manufacture by the ſafeguards it has thrown round them.—Under this ſalutary ſyſtem of laws the manufacture has grown up to its preſent ſize; and by means of its aid Great Britain has become the mighty nation it now is. We pray your Lordſhips not to aboliſh this ancient and approved ſyſtem, at leaſt not at once to aboliſh it for ever;—to preſerve to your Lordſhips the power of legiſlating upon this ſubject, as the future ſtate of circumſtances may require;—not to depart at

once

once from all that the wiſdom and experience of your anceſtors has ſanctioned, and at the ſame time to deprive yourſelves for ever of the means of correcting the evils too certain to flow from the innovation.

My Lords, I have now concluded what I had to offer to your Lordſhips on behalf of the Petitioners; I return your Lordſhips my humble acknowledgements for the great attention with which you have been pleaſed to honor me; and have only to add the full confidence repoſed by the Petitioners in the wiſdom and juſtice of your Lordſhips, and the aſſurance they feel, that they ſhall not now, for the firſt time, retire from your Lordſhips bar without a continuance of that protection, to which they truſt they have not forfeited their title, and which they have never yet failed to receive from the legiſlature of Great Britain.

THE END.

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